

**History**  
**OF**  
**Woodford County**

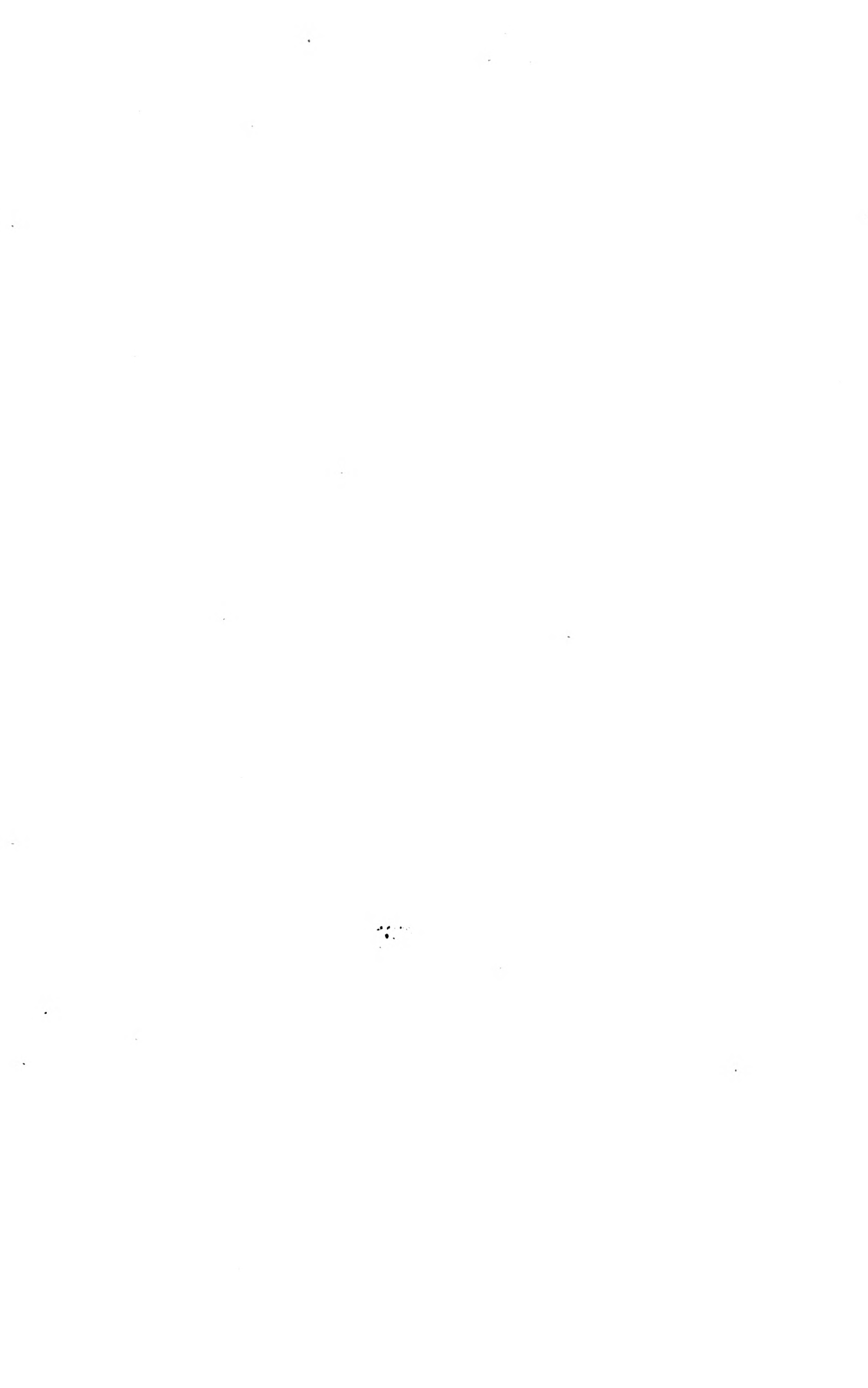
---

**ROY L. MOORE**

THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ILLINOIS  
LIBRARY

977.353  
M78h

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY







HISTORY  
OF  
WOODFORD COUNTY.

---

BY ROY L. MOORE, A. B.

---

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE SETTLEMENT  
AND GROWTH OF WOODFORD COUNTY.

---

EUREKA, ILL.:  
WOODFORD COUNTY REPUBLICAN.  
1910.

COPYRIGHTED  
1910

977.353

m78n

## PREFACE.

In the following pages an effort has been made to give in a clear, concise manner the history of the settlement and growth of Woodford county. The aim has been to give a condensed, yet complete statement of facts in a clear, unprejudiced way. No attempt has been made to eulogize the men who have made the county what it has become, altho there are many who merit the highest encomiums.

In the preparation of this volume aid has been received from a great number of sources and to all who have so willingly aided in this work, I extend my heartfelt thanks. The little volume is presented to the public with the sincere wish that it may add to the knowledge of local history among our people. Every effort has been made to insure its authenticity, but in a work of this character it is impossible to prevent the creeping in of some mistake. I trust that whatever errors may have occurred in this effort to serve the public may be regarded with the same leniency and kindness as my previous efforts.

I wish to express my gratitude for the use of half-tones to the Minonk News, Bloomington Pantagraph, Minonk Dispatch, Woodford County Republican, Benson Bee, Metamora Herald, El Paso Journal, Geo. W. Nance, of Bloomington, editor of the history of the Nance family; and Henry B. Meek of Kansas City, editor of the history of the Meek family.

Respectfully,

ROY L. MOORE.

18D13 Roy L. Moore 50

352113



ROY L. MOORE.

## INDEX.

### CHAPTER I.

Early Indian Population—Explorations by the Whites—  
La Salle Floats Down the Illinois—Territories Organ-  
ized—Division of Illinois into Counties—Woodford  
County Created—The First Settlement—Spring Bay,  
Metamora, Walnut Grove, Panther and White Oak  
Groves Settled—The First Store Opened ... Pages 9-16

### CHAPTER II.

Relics of Indian Life—Spring Bay Indian Graveyard—  
Settlement of Spring Bay Township—Mills Erected—  
Town Founded—Township Organized—Partridge Town-  
ship Settled—Religious Services Held—Partridge  
Drainage District—Worth Settled—The First Church  
Erected at Lourds ..... Pages 17-24

### CHAPTER III.

Settlement of Metamora—Hanover Established—Under-  
ground Railway—J. A. Ranney Once Conductor—  
Joseph Morse Once Arrested for Aiding Fugitive Slave  
—Schools of the Township ..... Pages 25-33

### CHAPTER IV.

Walnut Grove Settled—Varsailles Established—First Rail-  
road Thru Township—Eureka and Cruger Founded—  
Cruger Township Organized—Schools Founded—Caze-  
novia Settlers—Township Organized and Named—First  
Postoffice Established—Settlement of El Paso Township  
—El Paso and Kappa Founded—Township Organized  
..... Pages 34-45

## CHAPTER V.

History of City and Township of Minonk Coincident—Panola and Minonk Form one Precinct—Township Divided—Settlement of Roanoke—First Schools of Township—Township Organized and Named—Linn Township Settled—Churches Organized—Panola Settled—Kansas and Montgomery Established—Religious and Educational . . . . . Pages 46-61

## CHAPTER VI.

Palestine Settled—Religious History—Township Organized—Clayton Settlements—Linn and Clayton Connected—First Schools of the Township—Greene Township Pioneers—Early Hardships—Township Organized—Noted Men from Greene . . . . . Pages 62-75

## CHAPTER VII.

The Settler's Cabin—Hardships Without—Swamps and Sloughs—Prairie Fire—Farm Implements—Home-Made Clothing—Pioneer Gatherings . . . . . Pages 76-84

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Early Schools—The First School—Walnut Grove Academy Founded—Eureka College Charter—Public Schools of To-day—Pioneer Preacher—Church Organizations—The Oldest Pastor in Point of Service—Sunday Schools—Woodford County Y. W. C. A. Pages 85-95

## CHAPTER IX.

The County Organizes—First Commissioners—First Session of Court—Division into Townships—Supervisors and County Officers . . . . . Pages 96-102

## CHAPTER X.

County Seat Located at Versailles—Hanover Secures the Prize—New Court House Erected—El Paso Contests for County Seat—Eureka and Roanoke Seek to Secure the Prize—Elections of 1873-1883-1894—Seat of Justice Removed to Eureka—New Court House and Jail Erected—County Poor Farm . . . . . Pages 103-114

## CHAPTER XI.

Roads Laid in the County—State Road—First Supervisors of Roads—Stage Coach—Illinois Central Built—Toledo, Peoria and Western Laid Out—Railroads Multiply—Telegraph and Telephone—Automobiles Pages 115-121

## CHAPTER XII.

Enlistment in Civil War—History of Woodford County Companies—Black Hawk War—Mexican War—Spanish-American War ..... Pages 122-133

## CHAPTER XIII.

Cholera Epidemics—Winter of 1830-'31—Winter of 1836-'37—Storms of 1858—Storms of 1875—Other Storms ..... Pages 134-138

## CHAPTER XIV

Early Political Views—Lincoln and Douglas Debate—Logan Rally—Campaign of 1888—Other Elections—List of Officers—County Vote for Presidential Candidates ..... Pages 139-148

## CHAPTER XV.

Milling Interests—Explosion at the Secor Mill—Explosion at Panola—Benson Mill—Grain Interests—Banking—The Press—Mining—Eureka Canning Factory—Minonk Produce Company ..... Pages 149-172

## CHAPTER XVI.

The Early Towns of the County—Bowling Green—Spring Bay—Versailles—Metamora—The Old Metamora House—St. Mary's Orphanage—Religious Interests of the Town..... Pages 173-184

## CHAPTER XVII.

Settlers of Slabtown—Farniville—Washburn Settled—Religious Interests—El Paso Founded—Carnegie Library—Educational and Religious Interests—Fires—El Paso Fair ..... Pages 185-198

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Minonk Established—Village Surveyed—Minonk School and Churches—Railroads—Incorporated as a City—Benson Surveyed—The Growth of the Town—Churches—Roanoke Settled—The First Postmaster—Village Incorporated—Roanoke Fires. .... Pages 199-212

## CHAPTER XIX.

Eureka Founded—Origin of Name—The Industries of the Early Period—The Town Incorporated—Churches—Town of Cruger Platted—Its Business History—Secor Platted in 1857—Early Comers—Its Business History—Churches and Schools—Panola and Its Early Promise—Fail to Get a Railroad Crossing—Kappa an Early Mail Center—Early Business Prosperity—Ira C. Stone, the Oldest Man in the County—Early Settlers—Low Point—Its First Location—Saw Mill—Railroad—Tile Factory—Cazenovia—Business—School and Churches—Woodford a Grain Station in Minonk Township—Goodfield and Congerville Grain and Business Points in Montgomery Township . . . . . Pages 213-231

## CHAPTER XX.

Miscellaneous—Old Settlers' Picnic—Old Settlers' Association Organized 1874—Re-organization 1891—Deer Hunting—Andrew Tomb—Jehu Hinshaw—Peter Kennell—James Finley—Shelby M. Cullom—The Brubakers—Christopher Roth—F. J. Briggs—Thomas Whorrall—The Hammers Family—Woodford County Agricultural Association—John Leys—James Shields, Sr.—Allen Hart—First Jury in Woodford County—Abraham Lincoln—Mrs. Nancy Kirk, the Oldest Woman—The Law—Early Attorneys—Medicine—The First Physician—Woodford County Medical Association—Historical Society Organized 1903—A Sad Accident—W. E. Wyrick . . . . . Pages 232-248



## CHAPTER I.

### Early Settlements.

**T**HE brief span of a century serves to embrace the history of the growth and development of Woodford county, yet within that comparatively short period the vast unbroken wilderness has become one of the garden spots of Illinois. Prairies over which deer and wolves roamed unmolested have become the home of a prosperous, energetic farming people. Vast regions, but a few years ago uncrossed save by an Indian trail, are now crossed and recrossed by roads of steel that carry, with constantly increasing efficiency, the growing traffic of an energetic population. Wide sections that were once unbroken by a tree are dotted with groves planted by the hand of man, which add their beauty to the grandeur of the scene. Here and there thriving towns have risen to contribute their share to the wealth and prosperity of a growing country.

The territory now embraced within the borders of Woodford county was once the camping ground of roving Indian tribes. The early settlers found here scattered representatives of the Pottawotamies. These were as a rule friendly to the whites, altho occasionally some slight disturbance caused a rupture between them for the time being. During the winter of 1830-'31, which was noted for the great snow, they proved of great assistance to the settlers. Other tribes roamed over this region at an earlier date, among which were Foxes and Saes. North of Woodford county, near La Salle, lies Starved Rock where the now famous Illini made their final stand against their enemies and

were destroyed. These tribes hunted freely over that part of Illinois of which Woodford is a part. The western portion of the county is particularly rich in relics of an early Indian occupation. Along the banks of the Illinois are numerous mounds that are the relics of a departed people. A number of these have been opened and found to contain various weapons and other tokens of the manner of living of our predecessors. Near Metamora there are evidences of that region having been the scene of a fierce battle between Indian tribes. North of there was the lodge of the chief Black Partridge, whose name is handed down to us in the township of that name.

This portion of the county has the honor of being first chosen by the pioneer as a place of settlement. The traveler then that region feels that he is on historic grounds. In 1680 La Salle, the great French explorer, floated down the Illinois and built on the bank of the river the Fort Creve Coeur, now famous in the history of the state. The exact location of the fort is in dispute, but the latest claim is that made by Dan R. Sheen, the well-known attorney of Peoria, who believes it was located on this side of the river on the farm he now owns in Tazewell county. Be that as it may, there is little doubt that the western part of our county was visited by the great explorer and his followers.

The region now embraced in the boundaries of the county has belonged at various times to different territories, and, since the division of Illinois into counties began, it has been a part of a number of different counties. At the time of the Revolutionary war, three colonies, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Connecticut, claimed possessions in the territory now included in Illinois. In 1778 Virginia, which claimed the central and southern parts of the state, formed its possessions, Woodford together with the rest, into a county called Illinois, named in honor of the tribe of Indians. When the territory was organized at a later date this name was retained. At that time this portion of the state was an unbroken wilderness. The most visionary would have found little prospect of future greatness.

At the close of the Revolutionary war, these states ceded their possessions to the National government, and in 1787 the region northwest of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi, was organized as the Northwest Territory under the famous ordinances of 1787. General Arthur St. Clair was appointed first territorial governor. In 1790 he organized a county in the southwest, embracing the historic region of Kaskaskia, and named it St. Clair in honor of himself. In June of that same year Knox county was organized, and included the central and northeastern parts of this state, and all of Indiana. Woodford was a part of this vast county. In 1800 Indiana territory was formed, with Illinois as a part of it. William Henry Harrison was its first governor. It was not until 1809 that Illinois was organized as a territory with Ninian Edwards as its first governor.

The division of the state into counties was a process that covered many years. The creating of new counties and the adjustment of boundary lines was in the hands of the members of the legislature, so that political influence went far toward bringing into existence numerous counties in the state. The desire for the location of the county seat frequently led citizens, who were ambitious for the advancement of their town, to petition for the creation of a new county, or a readjustment of boundary lines, that would be more favorable to carrying out their plans. The settlement of the Southern part of the territory occurred at a much earlier date than that of the Central and Northern portions. As a natural result the southern counties were of much earlier origin than those of this region. In 1801 an adjustment of boundaries was made and all that portion of Illinois north of the mouth of the Embarrass river, including at least three-fourths of the area of the state was included in Madison county. In 1814 a dividing line was formed passing north and south thru Madison county along the Third Principal Meridian, dividing the territory now embraced in the county of Woodford along the line, now separating Greene township from Roanoke and Clayton township from Linn. The appended list shows the dates at which changes

occurred and the names of counties to which territory now in Woodford belonged. During this time the eastern part was in one county and the western portion in another.

**Eastern Part.**

1814-'16 Edwards  
1816-'19 Crawford  
1819-'21 Clark  
1821-'25 Fayette

**Western Part.**

1814-'17 Madison  
1817-'21 Bond  
1821-'25 Sangamon

In the early 20's the first settlements occurred within the present limits of the county. The western portion was settled first and any county business to be transacted had to be done with the officials at the county seat in Springfield. In 1825 the western part was permitted to transact business in Peoria, altho it was not an actual part of that county. In 1827 Tazewell county was created and originally embraced all of what is now Woodford. Tazewell was named in honor of Governor Lyttleton W. Tazewell, a prominent lawyer, representative in congress and member of the United States senate from Virginia. During this period settlers began to come in more rapidly, and in 1830, still another change was made. McLean county was created and the eastern portion of Woodford was given to McLean. The dividing line between Tazewell and the newly created county was six miles west of the Third Principal Meridian, running along College street Eureka. The new county was named in honor of John McLean, a stalwart pioneer lawyer and territorial judge. He was the first representative in Congress from Illinois, and later United States senator from this state. This was the last change that took place before the passage and approval of the law creating Woodford county in February, 1841. While these events were in progress the county was gradually becoming more thickly settled and at the time of the organization of the county several towns had been started.

Strange as it may seem to us at the present day the timber lands were the first choice of the pioneer, who was free to choose the best of the land. The prairies were shun-

ned as giving little hope of productive returns. Most of the settlers came from wooded regions and had learned to love the timber. Years after the first settlement was made the pioneer still made his home in the wooded lands. He was not without reason for clinging to the timber, for the woods furnished logs for his cabin, fuel for his fire, and material for his fences; while the prairies with their rank grasses, great sloughs and ponds did not furnish an inviting prospect. Only by the success of the more daring were the people induced to take government lands on the prairie.

The first actual settlement that was of a permanent nature was made in the early 20's, altho a man named Bleylock was in the county as early as 1819. The first settlers found him living Indian fashion, spending his time hunting and fishing. He had a family and lived in the region of Partridge and Spring Bay townships. There is so much uncertainty about this man as to create a doubt as to whether his name was William or George Bleylock. He was soon followed by settlers of a more permanent character. During the next few years numerous emigrants came who were the foundation of a prosperous settlement. Situated near the river, which furnished the easiest and quickest means of travel, it was natural that the settlements in the vicinity of Spring Bay should grow. In 1822 William Blanchard, who came from Vermont, crossed the Illinois and began to farm on this side of the stream. He built his cabin just across the line in Tazewell county. This is said to have been the first house between Fort Clark, afterward called Peoria, and Chicago. At a later date Mr. Blanchard became a resident of Spring Bay township. The next year a cabin was erected within the boundary of Woodford by a Mr. Darby. This cabin was probably the first erected in the actual limits of the county, and was built in 1823. The next decade witnessed a slow but no less certain growth. Horace, Austin, and Joseph Crocker came from Columbia county, New York, and at once identified themselves with movements for the growth of the settlement. Horace and

Austin Crocker were interested in the erection of the first mill operated by water power in the west end, altho not the first in the county. A mill was a very essential part of the early settlement. Means of communication with the outside world were so meager as to cause the settler to depend entirely on the local mill for the grinding of his wheat and corn. The news of the movement for a new mill was hailed with great satisfaction, altho there had been a small mill operated by horse power there before. Allen and Thomas Donohue were at one time interested in this mill, but it finally passed into the hands of Rowland Crocker, and for more than half a century it was an important factor in the business life of Spring Bay. The building was finished in 1834. Later William Hoshor erected what was known far and wide as Hoshor's mill. The owner came to Woodford county with his brother Jefferson in 1830 from Fairfield, Ohio. This mill enjoyed an extensive business for many years.

Four other points in the county were of almost as early settlement as was the west side, Metamora, Panther, Walnut and White Oak Groves. Clustering around the region of Metamora, or Hanover, as it was first called, are a great number of historical events that make that vicinity the delight of the historian. About 1823 Daniel, William and Solomon Sowards came to that region from New England and were soon followed by others.

In 1836 the first postoffice in the county was established at Black Partridge, a point three miles north of the present site of the village. The office was named in honor of Black Partridge, an Indian chief whose lodge was at an early date in that neighborhood. It was located in the house of James Boys, who was the first postmaster. The duties of the postmaster of that day were not arduous. Very few papers were taken and letters were few and far between. Postage stamps had not come into use, and the postage was usually paid by the recipient of a letter. Rates were high, and it was sometimes a serious matter to get a letter from the office. A little

later an office was opened at Park's mill about a mile from Metamora, with William Davenport as postmaster. This was finally called Partridge Point, altho Hanover seems to have been the name first selected. The name of the Indian chief was again honored. At a later date this office was removed to the village by R. T. Cassell.

While these events were in progress in the west end, similar events were taking place in Walnut Grove, which embraced the territory around Eureka. These were timbered lands along Walnut creek. Its wooded hills proved an inviting prospect for the pioneer, and about 1824 Joseph Dillon found his way to that region and began farming. That was but the beginning of a migratory movement that had Walnut Grove as its destination. Many of these settlers were from Kentucky. Some came because of their dislike of slavery, others came in the hope of bettering their condition. By 1832 there were a sufficient number there to organize a church, and the Christian church was formed, with 13 members. Southeast of Walnut Grove, along Panther creek was another point of settlement. In 1830 William and Campbell Moore came to the region afterward known as Bowling Green. They at once prepared for the erection of a mill on the bank of Panther creek. This was a short distance from where the town was afterward laid out, and was the first water mill built in the county.

White Oak Grove was settled in 1828. Located near what became the boundary line between Woodford and McLean counties, its history is closely connected with that of the latter. Robert and Samuel Phillips were the first comers to that region, but they were soon followed by others who established themselves and began farming.

The next decade witnessed the arrival of numerous settlers from the older states or from older portions of Illinois. This paved the way for the opening of stores. Towns were at that time widely scattered. Grain was frequently taken to Peoria, Pekin, and even to Chicago. It was some time after the first settlement was made before a store was

opened. In 1836 Solomon Tucker opened one at Hanover. His example was shortly afterward followed by Israel and Weeks. The year following James and Aaron Richardson opened a store in Bowling Green. Shortly afterward Durritt and Calloway began business in Versailles.

In 1840 Scott and Munn opened a grain office at Spring Bay. This gave the county for the first time a direct means of transportation for their grain on the river boats. It made Spring Bay a point of importance among the early settlers and it held a prominent place for many years.



## CHAPTER II.

### The West End.

THE history of the west side of the county embraces Spring Bay, Partridge and Worth townships. Bordered on the west by the Illinois river, its area is hilly and wood clad. For several miles east of the river the roads are winding and its scenery is picturesque. Years before the feet of the white man touched this region, it was occupied by Indian tribes, and these have left on that territory the unmistakable evidence of their occupation. When their white brothers came to the country, they still found scattered representatives of Indian tribes, among these were the Potawatamies, Sacs, Foxes and Ottawas. The timber lands offered protection from the fierce storms that swept unimpeded over the wide prairies, at the same time they furnished an abundance of game to satisfy the eager hunter. The broad waters of the Illinois invited him to its banks, opening the way for his canoe and supplying him with fish. The springs, which abounded, furnished an abundance of pure water. The region offered him an ideal retreat.

This part of the county is rich in relics of a previous occupation. A number of mounds are found in Partridge and Spring Bay townships that were without question thrown up by those who possessed the country in by-gone days. Near Spring Bay on Mrs. Gunther's property is found a very perfect specimen of a mound. It covers quite a large area, and it is almost perfectly rounded at the top. It has never been opened, in deference to the wishes of the owner who desires to preserve it as it is. The origin of these mounds is in dispute, some claim that they

were built by the so-called mound builders of prehistoric times, while others believe that they were the work of the Indians themselves. The contents of the mounds thus far explored indicate that they were of Indian origin. The question is, however, an open one.

An Indian graveyard extends north and south thru the village of Spring Bay. From what is seen of this graveyard, they appear to have buried their dead in trenches about two feet in depth. In digging cellars or excavating for foundations along the line of this graveyard, Indian skeletons are frequently found.

This region was the scene of the first settlement made within the boundary of Woodford county. The site was selected by the pioneer because of its proximity to the river. It was but a short time after the coming of the first settlers that new comers began to arrive from the older states, and from the shores of Europe. Germany and France sent many loyal, sturdy settlers from their shores to Woodford county. Many of these came to New Orleans, and ascended the Mississippi and Illinois rivers to the landings near the western borders of Spring Bay or Partridge. Others came to Chicago, and pushed their way to county borders. These people possessed the perseverance and sterling integrity that made them the foundation of the county's true greatness. No more loyal, patriotic citizens of America have been found than these pioneers and their descendents.

### **Spring Bay.**

The region of Spring Bay early became the home of a thriving class of pioneers. Not great in wealth nor extended in power, yet having a wealth of patience and courage that enabled them to bring the river bottoms under cultivation.

Among the most prominent of these pioneers was the Belsley family. In 1831 Joseph Belsley settled in Woodford county. He lived on the west side until 1879, when his death occurred. Several of the descendents of this family are quite widely known through the county, being now residents of Roanoke. Beside Joseph Belsley there were

Christian, Michael and Peter, who settled in the same vicinity. Michael only remained a short time and moved to Tazewell county. Peter died there, and of the four, Christian is the only one living in the county today. He is 81 years of age and has resided here since he was seven years of age. They came from Europe, and were among those settlers who came on the river.

Horace, Austin and Rolland Crocker came from Columbia county, New York, and for a number of years were prominent figures in Spring Bay life. They came among the earliest settlers in the county, and soon erected the Crocker mill. For more than half a century this served the people of the west end, but it has long since gone to decay.

Another well known miller was William Hoshor, who came in 1830 from Ohio. He was accompanied by his brother Jefferson, who served as county commissioner for several years. Hoshor's mill was another of the early enterprises of the county. A part of it still stands as a relic of its former prosperity. The Williams family was also well known figures in the township, the three brothers, Richard, Lewis and Jackson, being connected with the business interests of the town. C. A. Genoways was another who held a prominent place in the business life of Spring Bay. J. C. and Phineas Shottenkirk came in the early 30's from New York. They bought land and prospered in their newly founded home. There were numerous other prominent settlers aside from these, among whom were William Blanchard, who settled in 1822 in Tazewell county and later moved to Spring Bay township. Jesse Day who began to farm there in 1829, Angus McQueen in 1837 came from New York, being a native of Scotland. Isaac Phillips, Jacob Wilson, Elzy and Sampson Bethard, George Sommers and William Barker were other pioneers of that region.

These settlers had been here but a few years when they began to make plans for founding towns. Spring Bay was one of the early villages of the county. It was founded in

1836, before the organization of Woodford county and was at that time a part of Tazewell county.

The first schools were taught in the cabins of those interested in education. The township now has two schools expending about \$1,100 annually in their support.

For many years Spring Bay was without a church, but in recent years a church has been erected there and it has a small congregation.

When the townships were formed the portion of the county forming the subject of this discussion was laid out as a township, altho it was not half the size of a congressional township. The name of the village within its borders was assigned to the newly created township. The first officers were as follows: Supervisor, G. W. Schnibley; assessor, John Hazard; collector, C. A. Genoways; town clerk, C. S. Shults.

The present township officers are as follows: Supervisor, Alfred Hoshier; collector, William S. Eichorn; assessor Adolph Hoffman; clerk, Henry Bieber; commissioners, Fred J. Loser, Gottlieb Koch, Robert Miller; Justices, Peter Loser, George Winkler; constables, Otto Urban and Lewis Mackey.

### Partridge.

To Partridge township belongs the honor of being the home of the first white settler in the county, for altho William Bleylock merely lived Indian fashion in the woods and hills, he must be considered a settler, since his family resided with him in their tent or wigwam. It was several years before settlers of a more permanent character began coming to the forest clad hills. The first among these was Francis Ayers, who came from Ohio in 1831, having previously stayed a short time in Metamora township. Joseph Belsley, familiarly known as "Red Joe" came to Partridge from France in 1831. Shortly afterward Louis A. Guibert came from the same country, settling in that township in 1833.

Joseph Johnson came to the township about 1834, and operated a grist and saw mill. John, Isaac, David and Peter

Snyder arrived in 1834, coming from Germany. John Sharp came from Peoria in 1835. Other settlers were Chauncey Baker, Philip Bettelyne, John M. Clingman, Daniel and Samuel Hedlock, Daniel Sowards, Benjamin Young and William Hunter. There has never been a town in Partridge township, but there was at one time a store, conducted by George Ramey. The first blacksmith shop was opened by Jeff. Tolafero. It ultimately passed into the hands of Mr. Johnson. A postoffice was maintained at the home of Chauncey Baker for a number of years, and mail was brought over from Chillicothe by any one going over.

The earliest preachers in the township were Rev's Davenport, Palmer and Pigsley. For many years the people of Partridge were without a church, but in recent years one has been erected about four miles southwest of Cazenovia. Here the settlers have enjoyed the privilege of hearing the gospel proclaimed since its dedication. It is of the Christian denomination. The first schools were taught in the homes, Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Plummer being the pioneer teachers. There are now in the township three schools, expending annually about \$1,200 for their support.

When the townships were formed in the county, Partridge was named for the Indian chief, Black Partridge, and Jefferson Hoshor first acted as supervisor. The township is at present represented by the following officials: Supervisor, Solomon Winkler; clerk, Ross Beavers; assessor, Andrew Butte; commissioners, John Bohlander, Louis Curry, Ben Fuchs; justices, Louis J. Johnson and Wm. Jones; constable, Henry Spillman.

One of the most important undertakings ever launched in the county was begun a few years ago by citizens and land owners in Partridge township. It was known as the Partridge Drainage district. A petition was presented in the county court for the formation of a drainage district that would drain land valued at more than a million dollars. The cost of the work would probably reach one hundred

thousand dollars. L. A. Guibert was appointed commissioner, but the work was never completed.

One of the pleasant occasions for the gathering of the people of Spring Bay, Worth and Partridge townships is the annual fish fry. People gather for miles around and enjoy the music, amusements and speeches. All are treated to all the fish they can eat, and enjoy a general good time.

### Worth.

South of Partridge and east of Spring Bay lies Worth township. Early in the history of the county Worth began to attract settlers to its territory. Among the earliest of these was Zedock Hall, a pioneer Methodist preacher. For years no figure in Methodism was more prominent in Woodford county than was this early expounder of the gospel. His message was heard far and wide, and was productive of much good. For many years his son Lewis Hall lived in Worth township. Among other early settlers may be found the names of Peter Weber, Christian Smith, Charles Molitor, Joseph Schertz, Christian Belsley, Jacob Joerger, Martin Sommers, Peter Naffzinger, "Red Joe" Belsley, M. Wagner, John J. Tool, David Kindig, James West, John, Christian and Thomas Brownfield, Simon Groves, Samuel Beck, John Sunderland and Thomas Sunderland, Jr. Peter Klein opened the first blacksmith shop, while William Hoshor owned the first hotel, which was called the German-town House. Peter Saale conducted a bar and grocery there for a number of years. This was also kept at one time by Frank Tropp. Later a saw mill was erected by Mr. Hoshor. This little hamlet was known for years as German-town. Another well known resort of former days was the Union House on the state road five miles west of Metamora. The later comers numbered among them Henry Waldschmidt, Peter Barner, John Miller, Valentine and Conrad Rohman, Adam and George Wenzel, Peter Gingerich, Charles Molitor, Conrad, Jacob and John Alig and George Greiner.

A number of these early settlers came from Lorraine.

They brought their household goods to the sea shore, sold their horses, put their goods on a sailing vessel and came to New Orleans. They were two and a half months on the trip. They then came on the Mississippi and Illinois to Spring Bay, which was as large as Peoria at that time. They are said to have brought the first wagons to the county. They hauled grain to Chicago in those days, and it required ten days to make the trip. The greater part of these early settlers built themselves log cabins. A number of these are still in use by residents of Worth township.

An interesting story is told by Mayor Frank Giehl, of Metamora concerning the first stand of bees in the western part of Woodford county. One of the pioneers was returning home one day, when he saw a swarm of bees that had settled on a tree near by. He was very anxious to have them, and improvised a novel means to capture them. A part of a hollow log was secured and a piece of his clothing was tied around the lower end and the bees were caught in the log. When they were all in he tied up the other end of the log and went on his way rejoicing. At home, he made a hive for his prize from another hollow log, and from this start he received his first honey.

Lourds was at one time a postoffice, the first postmaster being Henry Theobald. Mail was delivered there from Metamora.

Bricktown as it is named was a settlement so called from the fact that a large brick yard was at one time conducted there.

One of the earliest schools in the county was taught in Benj. Williams' barn by Mr. Ellmore, but the first school house was built at a much later date. As early as 1846 school was held in a log school house at Lourds. In 1882 a new building was erected. There are now six schools in the township which require an annual expenditure of about \$2,300 for their support.

Worth has one point of general interest that is the Church of Immaculate Conception at Lourds. The organi-

zation was formed in 1837, and for several years held services in a barn. In 1840 a little log church was erected. This was the first congregation in the county to build a church, and it is said to have been the first church built between Peoria and Chicago. This served for a number of years as a meeting place. The church was first served by a priest from Joliet. In 1854 Rev. Father M. Gipperich came to the organization and remained two years. About that time work on the new church was begun. It was built from brick made by Peter Wiltz in his brick yard, which was quite an extensive establishment. The church was finished in 1858, and in the storm of that year, the roof was blown off. It was at once replaced and the church still serves as a convenient place of worship. The structure cost about \$12,000. It has connected with it a large cemetery. There was at one time a log church under the control of the Lutheran denomination, but this long years ago passed out of the memory of the greater part of the people. An old Amish church was built on the State road in more recent years.

The township was organized in 1855, and Jacob Schuck was elected as its first supervisor.

The officers at present are as follows: Supervisor, Leo F. Schwenk; clerk, John Meister; assessor, John G. Eckstein; collector, John G. Fandel; commissioners, Wm. Rohman, Peter Kieswetter, Adam Geigerich; justice, Conrad Dubois. Ed. Noe; constables, Conrad H. Kerker, Charles Studer. Among the early settlers was George Schneider, a resident of Benson at the present time. He remembers many incidents connected with pioneer life, altho he was not among the first settlers.



## CHAPTER III.

### Metamora.

THE earliest settlers came to Metamora township when the county was but in its infancy. The pioneers were attracted to its picturesque woods, and soon had a flourishing little settlement. Around the site of Metamora cluster a host of historic memories that serve to make the actors in these important events the center of interest in the county. Even before the coming of the first settlers, the region was important in the Indian life of prehistoric days. No single portion of the country is so rich in historical data as is this.

The first settlers to make their appearance on the scene of action were Danial, William and Solomon Sowards. The exact date of this settlement is in doubt, but it was probably about 1824. The example set by these bold pioneers was followed by others and within a few years the region numbered a score of families. So rapid was this settlement that by 1836 there was a demand for a postoffice and in that year one was established about three miles north of the present site of the town, in the home of James Boys, who was the first postmaster in the county. It was discontinued in a short time and one was opened at Partridge Point. The first postoffice had been named for the chief, Black Partridge, and the name of the second again honored the old Indian chief. Partridge Point was near Metamora, the postoffice being at Parks' saw mill. William Davenport was the first postmaster there.

The year of 1836 was an important one in the growth of the county, as it witnessed the establishment of four

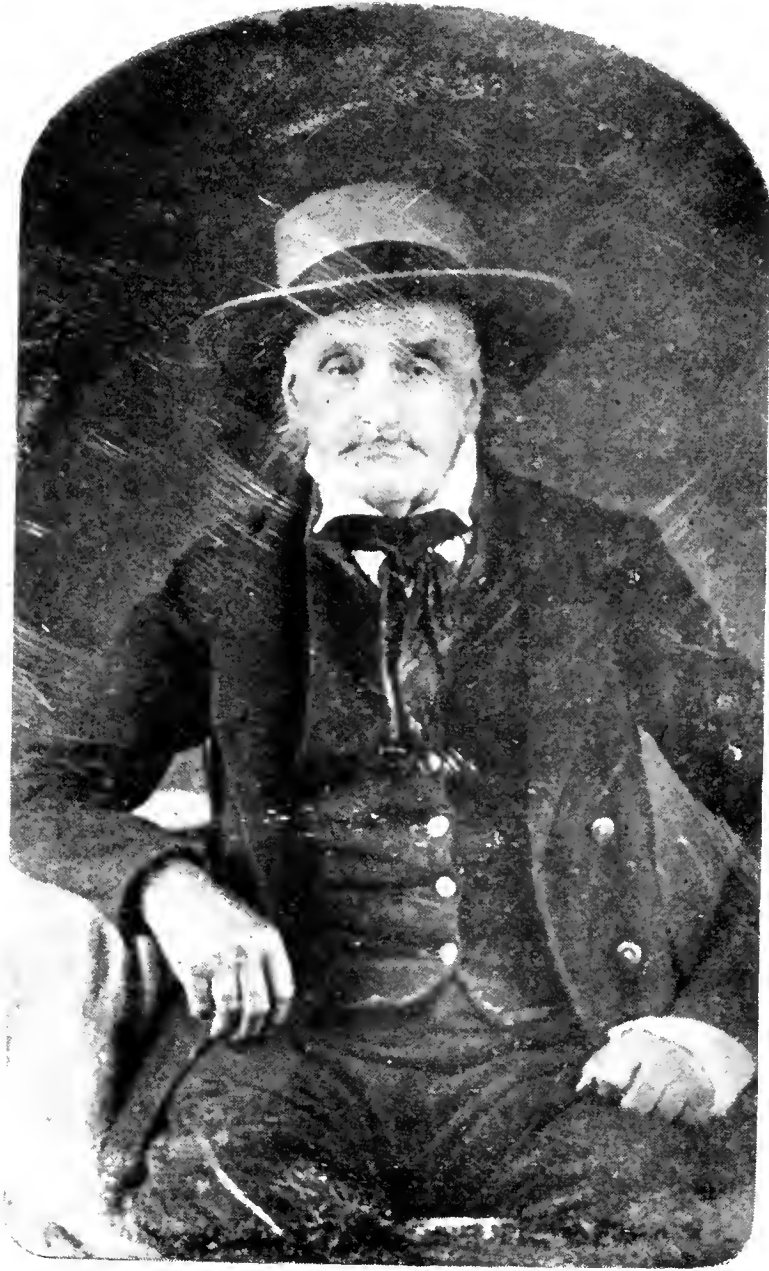
towns in quick succession, the first in the county. Metamora or Hanover as it was then called, was among this number.

Settlers came from various states and the region soon became one of the most populous parts of the county. In 1828 George Kingston settled in the township, coming from Ireland. Peter Engle, Sr., John Engle, Francis Bregeard, Christian Engle, Joseph Bachman and Michael Loerger came from France.

From Kentucky there came Robert T. Cassell, who was connected with the history of Metamora for many years; Joseph Wilkerson, William H. Delph and Jesse Dale. The latter was twice elected county treasurer of Woodford county.

Another prominent family from Kentucky was that of Jacob Banta, who came with his sons, David and Cornelius D., in 1832, and who was followed by a third son, Albert J., the next year. This family became one of the most influential in the county. Mr. Banta was a native of New Jersey, as was his grandfather, Albert Banta. The family originated in Holland and came to America in early colonial days. The first one to come over was Epke Jacob Banta in 1659. He settled at Bergen, now a part of New Jersey. Albert Banta was one of the fifth generation and was grandfather to Jacob Banta, the subject of our sketch. The latter was born in Hackensack, N. J., March 13, 1771, and was fourteen years old when he accompanied his parents to Kentucky. He came to Illinois in 1832 and lived a short time near Washington, then came to the region of Metamora. He became a prosperous citizen, living to be 90 years of age. He died Feb. 26, 1861. His sons, Cornelius D., David and Albert became prominent members of the rapidly growing community. Cornelius took up land near Metamora, as did also Albert. Among the most prominent members of the Banta family was Jacob Banta, an early settler of Roanoke, and later resident of Eureka. His son, Dr. C. F. Banta, is engaged in the practice of medicine in the latter city. The





JACOB BANTA,  
Early Settler of Metamora Township.

members of the firm of Banta Brothers, of Low Point, A. Lincoln, John L., Frank D. and Archie D. are sons of Cornelius Banta.

George Ray came to Illinois from Ohio in 1836 and soon came to Metamora, where he resided at the time of his death. He engaged in the cattle trade quite extensively in the early years of his life here. He soon became a prominent figure in the county and in 1850 was elected sheriff and in 1854 was again elected to that office. He was the father of Jacob Ray, who has been connected with the political life of the county for many years. In 1882 the latter was elected county clerk.

Welcome P. Brown came to Illinois from New York about 1833. He first settled in Bloomington after visiting several other points. He finally came to Woodford county and was chosen the first county judge in 1849.

In 1835 John Page, Sr., and Ebenezer Page came from New Hampshire to Woodford county and settled in the vicinity of Hanover. The members of the Page family trace their geneology back to John Page, who was born in Dedham, England, in 1586, and came to America with Governor Winthrop in 1830. The members of this family were prominent in their new home, and held various responsible positions. John Page, Sr., died at Metamora in 1855. Ebenezer Page died there also after a long and useful life. Of the decendants of these pioneers it is necessary to name three, John W., Adino and Samuel True Page. Of these the former was the most prominent. He held numerous prominent position. He was the first school treasurer of his township. In 1845 he was elected county commissioner of schools, having been elected as coroner the year before. In 1857 he was chosen county treasurer and was re-elected in 1859. Aside from these county offices he held various other positions. He was supervisor, school director, village treasurer, etc.

He erected the first house in Metamora, and was connected with the business interests for many years, being engaged in banking and the sale of merchandise.

Adino Page was also quite prominent. He was for eight years superintendent of the Woodford county poor farm, having held a similar position in Massachusetts. He was justice of the peace for about 18 years, and was engaged in business with John W. Page.

Both John W. and Samuel True Page enlisted in the Mexican war in 1846. Samuel Page also served in the war of the rebellion in the 108th regiment. Another prominent member of this family is Judge S. S. Page of Chicago, who holds a high rank as an attorney and judge. Dr. J. F. Page of Eureka is a member of this well known family.

Deacon Joel Ranney came to Metamora township in 1838 from Stockbridge, Vermont, making the journey across the country in a wagon drawn by two horses. He bought a tract of prairie land in what is now Metamora township. In 1848 his death occurred. Two children remained, Hon. J. A. Ranney and a daughter, Esther J. Packard. The former is still a prominent character in Metamora township. He was deeply interested in the solution of the slavery question and on one occasion was conductor on the underground railroad. He became prominent in the republican party and in 1876 was elected as a member of the legislature and served in the general assemblies of '77 and '79.

No account of the history of Metamora would be complete without a sketch of the Morse family, which was so prominently connected with the work of the underground railroad.

Parker Morse came to Woodford county in 1835. The family first settled in the vicinity of what later became Low Point, but in a short time they moved a mile south of the present site of Cazenovia, in Metamora township. There were several members of the family and the vicinity soon became known as the Morse settlement or Morsetown. Levi P. Morse was but 15 years of age when he came thru with his father to Illinois but he drove a team the entire distance from Vermont. Other members of the family were Joseph





**JOHN W. PAGE,**  
Early Settler of Metamora Township.



T., Milton and Mark Morse. These were among the first abolitionists who came here, and they were active in the work of the underground railroad, mention of which is made hereafter. Miss Love K. Morse is said to have taught the first free school in the county. It is appropriate that an account of the work of the underground railroad should appear at this point. Only one remains of all those connected with its work, J. A. Ranney, and he is able to tell many interesting incidents in connection with it.

### **The Underground Railroad.**

The Fugitive Slave law aroused great feeling among the opponents of slavery over the entire north. It was especially obnoxious to those who had belonged to the Abolitionists. So great was the opposition to its enforcement that concerted plans were made to evade it. These led to the formation of certain well defined routes that were taken by the slaves in their effort to reach Canada, where they would be free from pursuit. Since travel along these lines was done as secretly as possible, they came to be known as underground railroads.

Woodford county was no exception to the general rule, and there was bitter opposition to the enforcement of the fugitive slave law. This condition was not surprising, since the county had men, who were strong opponents of slavery and likewise men who would make any sacrifice to have the institution stamped out. Over this branch of the underground road many a run-away slave passed on his way to freedom. There was such a strong sentiment against the traffic that conductors and stations were found in sufficient number to carry on the work successfully.

Fugitives came into Woodford county from what was then called Deacon street, between Tremont and Morton. They passed around Washington, which was regarded as unfriendly toward plans for their escape, and came to the place of Deacon Dutton, half way between Metamora and Washington. Deacon Dutton himself was the principal con-

ductor from that station, altho George Kern also acted in that capacity. Patterson Scott was one of the conductors southeast of Washington. Mr. Dutton usually brought them to what was called Morsetown. This was a settlement of the Morse family and was south of Cazenovia, near the Morsetown cemetery. Captain Parker Morse and Joseph T. Morse were in hearty sympathy with all efforts made for the escape of the slave. From there the fugitives were taken to a point beyond Magnolia, to the home of a Quaker named Lewis, or if there happened to be no excitement, they were taken to the home of a man named Werk, near Crow creek, this side of Lacon.



J. A. RANNEY.

Deacon Parker Morse was an important character in this work of escape. North of Low Point, James G. Bayne, and the family of John McCoy, took an active part in aiding slaves. James Piper, east of Low Point, was also a strong sympathizer with those seeking liberty. J. A. Ranney, who still resides south of Cazenovia, once acted as a conductor on this road, and has a vivid recollection of some of his experiences on that trip, altho he was quite young at the time. He reached the home of Lewis, three miles beyond Magnolia, with his party about three o'clock in the morning. The family was aroused and Mr. Ranney still remembers the welcome sight of the room into which they were ushered on their arrival. He styles it the best looking room he ever saw.

In these trips the towns were avoided as much as possible as there was more danger of betrayal attached to going thru a town. It was a common occurrence to see bills posted offering a reward of \$50 to \$100 reward for the capture of some run-away boy or girl. Occasionally the reward was even greater than that. This was an incentive to aid in the recovery of any fugitive that might be seen, and made it necessary to take the quiet roads. Much of the traveling was done at night, and every precaution possible was taken to prevent discovery. All aid granted to these fleeing slaves was a violation of the fugitive slave law, yet in spite of this the work went on with very little molestation for a long time in this county. The efforts of the conductors were known in the community, but the general disposition seemed to be one of non-interference, altho there was an occasional murmur of disapproval.

On one occasion Joseph Morse was arrested for aiding in the escape of a slave. At that time Woodford county had no jail and he was taken to Pekin in Tazewell county, by William T. Magarity, who was sheriff at the time. The jailer was not at home when Mr. Magarity arrived with his prisoner so that Mr. Morse was left until his return. On the jailer's

appearance, the prisoner was discharged as his papers were not sufficient to warrant his detention. The indictment against him was finally quashed. This appears to be as far as the open opposition to the work of the road appears to have gone.

### Schools.

The educational interests of the township received attention at an early date. The first school was taught in 1836 by Miss Betsy Page. The first public school has been referred to as having been taught by Miss Morse. The trustees at that time were James Owens, Thomas Jones and Parker Morse. The work of education prospered and Metamora township has now nine schools in the township requiring an annual tax levy of \$7,000.

When the county was divided into townships, Metamora township was named for the town within its borders. The first supervisor was Simon P. Shope, who was honored by being chosen the first chairman of the board of supervisors.

The township is at present governed by the following officers: Supervisor, Henry Heininger; clerk, James Hall; assessor, Henry Longenbacher; collector, Lewis H. Wagoner; commissioners, John Schierer, John Minger, Joseph Schneider; justices, John L. McGuire, Frank Giehl; constables, J. D. Griggs and Ed Full.

One of the early residents of the township was Yost Bally who came there at an early date from Ohio. Two sons Samuel Bally, of Benson, and Christian Bally, of Roanoke, now reside in the county. Thomas Whorrall was another of the early settlers. For many years he took a prominent part in the affairs of his township. He later moved to Iowa where his death occurred.

## CHAPTER IV.

### Olio and Cruger.

**T**HE region now embraced in Olio and Cruger townships takes a prominent place in the history of Woodford county. Early in its development it became the goal toward which settlers from Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and other points of early settlement bent their steps. The forest that covered the banks of Walnut creek invited them to build their modest cabins, under the shade of spreading forest

trees, and the invitation met with ready response. The vicinity was called Walnut Grove, taking its name from the little stream that meandered thru it.

As early as 1824 settlers began coming to the region, and during the decade that followed, many pioneers found their way to that favored spot. Joseph Dillon is named as the one who broke the first ground for farming in this vicinity. John A. and Campbell Moore, W.



**HENRY B. MEEK.**

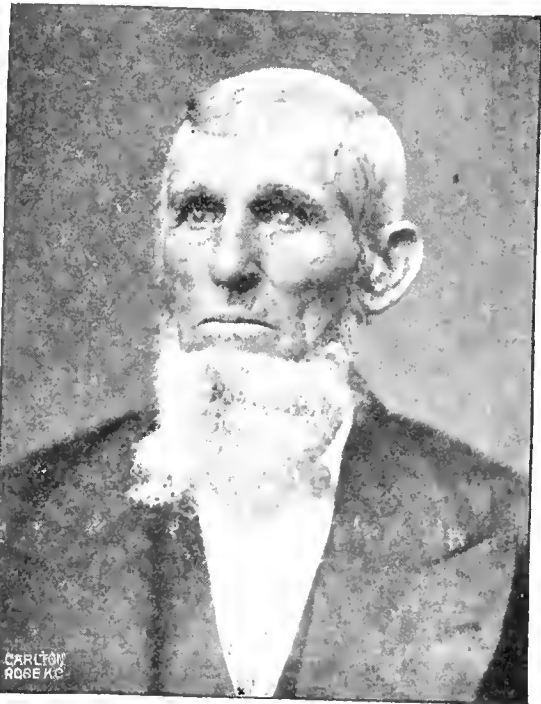
P. Atterberry, Matthew Bracken and others.

In 1831 Caleb Davidson came from Glasgow, Ky., and settled northwest of the present site of Eureka. The log cabin which the family occupied on coming to this country stood on the Davidson farm, which is still owned by W. A. Davidson, for more than seventy years. Unable to withstand the assault of time any longer, it now lies a crumbled wreck. Barton W. Stone held religious services in the Davidson barn in 1834. The Davidson home was open to all visitors who sought its shelter, and many a student made his home there without cost while attending the college at Eureka. John E. Davidson also came at an early date.

John Summers settled there in 1836, and made his home there for more than half a century. He was a member of the committee that was appointed in 1854 to divide the county into townships.

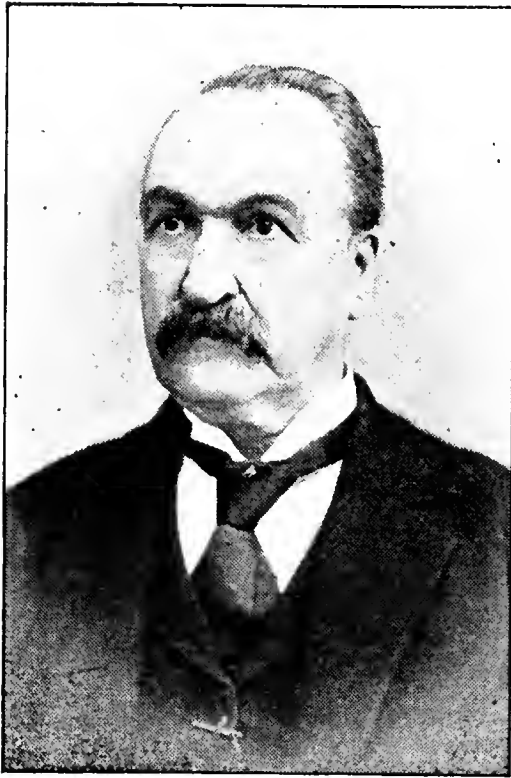
He was the first president of the Old Settlers' organized in 1870 and held that office seven years. He also served as county commissioner of schools.

There was little diversity in the hard experience of the pioneer settlers of those early times in Woodford county, but a soil of such virgin and continued fertility makes this now one of the most prosperous and favored regions of our beloved country. By the practice of scientific farming, and the introduction of the best stock the descendants of the early pioneers are proving worthy successors of their progenitors.



**JOSEPH MEEK.**

Daniel Meek came in 1826 and four years later Joseph and Henry Meek came from Indiana. The family had come originally from Kentucky, but had resided in Indiana for a short time before coming here. They were here at the time of the great snow, and saw many hardships. They came here in wagons, and settled on farm lands previously purchased for \$1.25 per acre. Henry Meek was captain of the home guards, a company organized to guard against the depredations of the Indians. The descendants of these pioneers have held numerous places of trust and responsibility. Foremost of these was Col. B. D. Meek, who was



**B. D. MEEK.**

lieutenant colonel in the 11th regiment of cavalry, judge of the county court, county treasurer, besides filling numerous other prominent positions in political life. He was recognized far and wide as one of the characters who has stood foremost in the records of the county. His son, L. F. Meek, is a well known attorney in Peoria, and was at one time a candidate for member of congress from the Peoria district. Other names well known among those who have shaped the policy of the county are those of D. R. Meek, Secor; E. P. Meek,

Fairbury; Jesse Meek, Peoria; Joseph Meek, Metamora; R. P. Meek, Peoria; Mrs. S. H. McClure, Mrs. J. A. Briggs. Joseph Meek, was elected county treasurer in 1902.

In 1834 B. J. Radford, Sr., came from Kentucky and at once became prominently connected with the church and



college. His descendants have been closely identified with the civic, social and religious life of the community. R. N. Radford was for many years an editor and publisher in Eureka, being connected with the Eureka Journal. C. H. Radford was well-known as an attorney in the county. Dr. B. J. Radford has been for many years connected with Eureka College as a professor. Recently he has severed his connection with that institution. He has filled some of the most important pulpits in the Christian church, including those in Cincinnati, Denver and other points.

A year earlier Ben Major came from Kentucky, and soon became a leader in the religious life of the little circle at Walnut Grove. He was the founder of Eureka College, and his name became noted far and wide because of his great heart and his devotion to the interest of others. He aided in the re-organization of the church in Walnut Grove, and was elder for a number of years. His son, Capt. Jo Major, was a captain in the 108th Illinois. He has long been connected with the business and political life of the county. Charles Major and Allen A. Major are prominent farmers still residing in the township.

Joshua Woosley, who came here in 1831, was a pioneer teacher and preacher, and was also the first assessor Woodford county had. His son, William Woosley, resided for many years in Eureka, and now resides near Mt. Zion.

John McClintock came to Illinois from Ohio in the 30's and settled in the southern part of the township. He has two sons and a daughter still residing in the county, E. L. McClintock, Eureka, W. H. McClintock, Cazenovia, and Mrs. Fry, Eureka. David and Thomas Deweese were well known characters in the early days, having come in 1830. Mrs. R. D. Smith is a representative of the family in Eureka.

Thomas Bullock came in 1835 from Woodford county, Kentucky. As will be seen from the following chapter, he was at the head of the movement for a new county, and thru his influence secured the passage of the bill providing for its

organization. M. R. Bullock came here in 1834. Among the members of the Bullock family that have stood high in the annals of the county, is Capt. W. M. Bullock, of 108th Illinois. W. S. Bullock, was for many years prominent as a resident of Secor. Elijah Dickinson came from Kentucky in 1835, and has left a record of good works. His sons, R. B. and E. W. Dickinson have identified themselves with the best interests of the community. The former is at the head of the Dickinson & Co., the extensive carriers. R. J. and E. B. Dickinson, his sons, are associated with him. E. W. Dickinson has held various positions of trust and honor, being at one time county surveyor. Miss E. J. Dickinson has been largely interested in the work of the churches and college. She was one of the editors of the history of Eureka College.

William Long settled in that vicinity, coming from New Albany, Ind. He came in 1827. Robert Bullington came in 1833. His daughter, Mrs. E. Pierce, still resides at Eureka. Among the settlers in the vicinity of Versailles were Amos and Warren Watkins. The former was one of the pioneer Christian preachers and did much to advance the interests of the church. Warren Watkins' home was noted for its open hospitality. No stranger was turned from the door without having his need supplied and his heart cheered. There is but one representative of the family now living in the county, Mrs. D. R. Meek, of Secor.

At a later date came Garland and David Moore from Kentucky. The former was a pioneer Methodist preacher, and his voice was heard in many a service. Of the children of this early minister but three remain: Ben L. Moore, J. D. Moore and Mrs. J. J. Mishler. Of the children of David Moore, but one remains in the county. C. D. Moore of Eureka. One son, Wm. Moore, represented the Tazewell county district in the state legislature, several years ago.

Rev. Wm. Davenort was another pioneer preacher of the Christian church. His family has been quite largely identified with the interest of Eureka. But one branch of the

family remains, that of Mrs. E. L. Davenport, widow of Edgar Davenport.

James Mitchell and family came and settled in the



**ELDER JOHN OATMAN.**

vicinity in 1833. Wm. Mitchell, a son, was for many years a well known resident of Mt. Zion. Another well known character among the pioneers was John Oatman. He was a leader in the organization of the Christian church in 1832. Jesse Oatman was in the Black Hawk war.

The first town in Olio township was Versailles, which was founded in 1836. In 1854-'5 the first railroad was built thru the township, and there are those still living who remember riding on the first train. H. H. Simpson recalls his riding on the first train between Eureka and El Paso. It was a free ride, and the accommodations were common flat cars with seats formed by laying boards on kegs. A rope

was stretched around the car to prevent any one from falling off. The railroad was first known as the Eastern Branch of the Peoria and Oquawka, but later became the Toledo, Peoria and Western.

A discussion arose as to the location of stations. Cruger was chosen as a site for a town, and a request was also made for a station at Eureka. This brought forth a vigorous protest from Cruger, the claim urged being that the towns were too close together. The two towns were established, however, in spite of the protest, Eureka in December, 1855, and Cruger in May 1856.

In 1870 Cruger township was separated from Olio and the first election resulted in the selection of the following township officers: Supervisor, George Boyd; collector, R. N. Radford; assessor, Jesse Meek; town clerk, Peter Moyemont; commissioners, A. P. Meek; R. C. Stewart and Thomas Ellis; justice of the peace, John Kaufman and John McPeak; constables, John Trimmer and Lewis Myers. The separation was due to the objection of the western part of the township to issuing bonds to aid in building the Chicago Pekin and Southwestern road. The new township was named for the village within its borders.

The first school in Cruger was taught in 1831 by William Hoshor. The township now has three schools, expending about \$1,200 annually for school purposes.

The first school in Olio was taught in 1837 by M. Bullock in a log cabin near the present site of Eureka. The township now has one graded school and five rural schools, expending about ten thousand dollars annually in their support.

Cruger township has one church known as the Mt. Zion Christian organization. It was formed about 53 years ago.

### **Cazenovia.**

The settlement of Cazenovia township dates back to the early 30's. The lands that bordered the timber formed an inviting field for the pioneer seeking a home, and in 1832 the first settlement of which we have record was made by a

man named Hubbard. He settled in the region that was later known as Low Point. During the next few years numerous settlers came into the new territory, the greater number of them coming from the Eastern states. The same year Isaac Buckingham and his son, Morgan, came from Pennsylvania. Judge W. E. Buckingham, who was the first associate justice in the county, being elected together with W. C. Poynter, in 1849. They were associated with Judge Welcome P. Brown, the first county Judge Woodford county had. In 1853 Mr. Buckingham was elected county judge and in 1865 John Buckingham was elected superintendent of schools for the county. The members of the family settled near Washburn.

About the same time the families of Thomas Jones and Isaac Moulton came to that vicinity. They were both from the east. The year of 1835 witnessed the arrival of a number of families that were to play an important part in the growth of the county. Among these were three brothers, Simen, Samuel and Abner Mundell, who came from Pennsylvania. The former went to California at the time of the gold fever, but the others remained in the county. In 1850 Samuel Mundell was elected coroner. Other members of the family have been well known in the political and business life of the county. Rev. James Owen was a pioneer preacher of the township. He came to the vicinity of Walnut Grove in 1835, having lived in Wayne county for a number of years prior to that time. He was noted as a hunter thruout that region and is said to have killed fifty-two foxes in a single year.

Jesse Hammers was another pioneer who came from Pennsylvania in 1835. He took an unusually active part in the development of the infant settlements and in directing the growth of the township. A few years later Emerald Fisher came. His family found numerous settlers there, but the country about them was still wild and unbroken at the time of their coming in 1840. Another member of the Fisher family was Willard Fisher, who came

a short time after Emerald. He left a Sweetheart back in Vermont and walked back to that state to claim his bride. They returned to Woodford county after they were married but did not make the return trip on foot.

The first church was built by the Baptists in 1849, and in 1857 the United Presbyterians erected a place of worship near Low Point. Their example was soon followed by the Old School Presbyterians, who erected their church in the same neighborhood. These organizations have each passed out of existence.

In 1855 the new township was organized and the township was named Cazenovia. Jeter Foster, Eli Rich, Thomas Clark and John Safford had come from the vicinity of Cazenovia lake, New York, and thru their influence the new township was given its present name. The first supervisor was John W. Acres.

The first postoffice was established in 1849 at Low Point. It was located a short distance from the present site of the village bearing that name.

The first school house was built of logs and was located on Mr. Owen's farm. George W. Taylor and Joseph Perry were those who first taught in this building. This was not the first school in the township as Miss Love K. Morse, had taught in the homes prior to that. There are now seven rural and one graded schools in the township. These expend about \$6,000 in their maintenance. The Washburn school is across the line in Marshall county.

Cazenovia township now has the following officers: Supervisor, J. H. Lesch; clerk, Frank Ehringer; assessor, Thomas McKee; collector, George Garrison; justices, B. F. Heighway and Daniel Jones; constable, Charles Tjaden, Jr.; commissioners, John Held, Frank Loscher, and W. W. Hare.

Just across the line in Marshall county are several well known characters, who have been connected with the history of this county. Among these is Oliver Fisher, whose parents came here in 1859. Among the members of his

family who came here were Elias and Elihu Fisher. The sons of Elias Fisher were Isaiah, Jabez, Oliver and Ira, and the daughters were Mary and Louisa. Isaiah and Jabez were in the Union army. T. H. Vaughn came from Greene county in 1850. His memory is filled with interesting data concerning the early history of Washburn.

On the completion of the railroad three towns, Washburn, Low Point and Cazenovia, sprang up. These have become the center of interest in the historic arena since their organization.

### **ElPaso.**

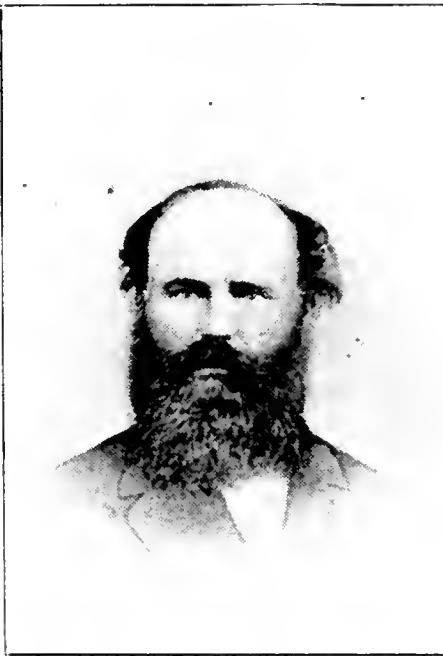
Settlers did not come to ElPaso township as early as to some other regions, but on the completion of the Central road, home seekers began to be attracted to its borders in great numbers. When the Toledo, Peoria and Western road was completed thru the township in 1856, crossing the Central at right angles at ElPaso, the inducement to settlers in its precincts was greater than ever. Many of the pioneers of the township were residents of the towns. There were however, settlers there long before the railroads were constructed or towns were established. In 1835 William, John and David Hibbs settled in the southeastern part of ElPaso township. These were perhaps the earliest settlers in that region, but there were others who came in a short time. Thomas Dixon came to the county in 1833, and first settled on the banks of the Mackinaw. Here he had a small mill. He later moved to the vicinity of Kappa. Smith Dixon, who resides near Kappa now is a son of Thomas Dixon, the pioneer. He has several children who have been prominent in the county. E. E. and F. E. Dixon, ElPaso township; Fred of Palestine, and W. H. Dixon of Kansas. The latter is a member of the board of supervisors from his township. The daughters are Mrs. Charles Metzger and Mrs. William Woosley.

Another pioneer was John Messer, who came from Ohio in 1836-7. Both Mr. Dixon and Mr. Messer were great hunters and game was plentiful. There was an abundance

to furnish all the meat the pioneer desired. Mr. Messer is said to have seen at least sixty deer in a single herd in El Paso township.

John Tucker came to Illinois in 1834 and settled in Tazewell county. In 1852 he came to the vicinity of Kappa. Among the living members of this family are Henry R. Tucker, of Eureka, and Frank Tucker, of El Paso. Asa Sparks settled at Kappa among its earliest residents. Christian

Schafer was another of the pioneers. He became one of the wealthiest men of the county. His son, F. B. Schafer, is a business man and attorney of El Paso.



**MAJOR J. H. WATHAN**

Two others who were prominent in the early life of the township were Major James H. Wathan and George L. Gibson, who became the founders of El Paso. They were men of wide influence and possessed considerable wealth

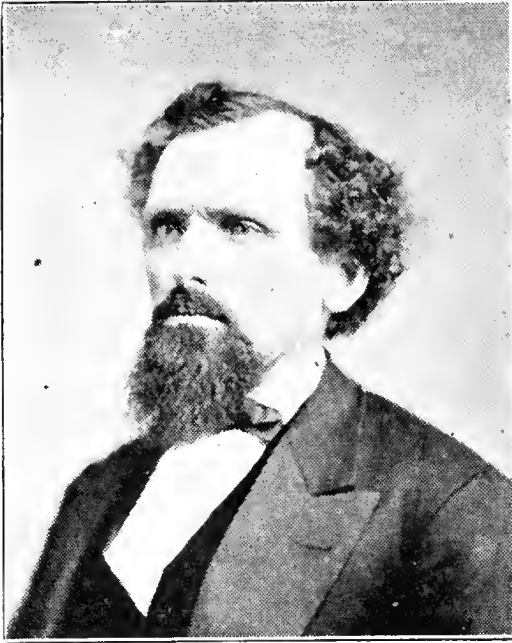
They came in 1856 and '57, and resided in El Paso for many years. The name, El Paso, was given to the new town and township by Major Wathan, who is said to have suggested the name in honor of El Paso, Texas. The name is Spanish and means The Pass.

The first sermon of which we have any record, was delivered in the depot at Kappa, by Rev. Gregg, of Hudson. Since then the religious interests have grown until there are now ten churches that have organizations in the township. These are, however, located in the towns, Kappa and El Paso.



The first school was opened at Kappa about 1856, with Miss Matilda Hassen as the first teacher. The educational interests have always received careful attention, and there

are now two excellent graded schools and five rural schools in the township. The tax levy for school purposes will reach about eleven thousand dollars annually.



**GEORGE L. GIBSON.**

The history of the township is very closely associated with the history of towns, which is discussed in another chapter. El Paso was founded April 20, 1854, while Kappa was established November 6th, 1854. The latter, how-

ever, first gave promise of a speedy growth. Its name was given to it by the Central Railroad officials, by whom the land on which it was located was owned.

In the list of supervisors given at the time of the division of the county into townships in 1855, the name of El Paso was not given. It was only a short time, however, until it was settled sufficiently to have an organization of its own. It was not, however, a full township, being only four miles in width.

The following are the officers: Supervisor, E. A. Childs; clerk, John W. Becker; assessor, D. K. Tobias; collector, C. M. Parmalee; commissioners, E. E. Crawford, John Wadsworth, J. N. Valentine; justices, S. A. Kuhn and F. L. Newton; constables, Thomas Umbarger and S. J. Moffatt.

## CHAPTER V.

### Minonk.

THE history of Minonk township and the City of Minonk are almost identical. During the years of 1852 and 53 work was being pushed on the Illinois Central railroad and a year later trains were running thru Minonk. Prior to that time the township had been unsettled. It belonged to that prairie region that had for so many years been shunned by the pioneer. The prejudice against the prairies was gradually giving way before the positive proof of the fertility and value. When the Central was completed, it opened a wide field for settlement, and advantage was soon taken of the cheap lands coupled with the advantage of railroad connections.

The first man to make an actual settlement in the township was Samuel Work, who came from Pennsylvania to Illinois in 1831. He came to Woodford county in 1854, and settled in Minonk township. He was the first station agent and was also elected as the first justice of the peace. The second man to come was Charles Dobson, whose name frequently occurs as one of the prominent characters of Minonk. He erected the first house built in the township. C. W. Goodrich was next in the settlers of the region. He erected the second house. Next, Johathan Macey came. Others who were pioneers, were James Parker and Americus Pogue. Thus far the settlers have resided

in the town, but it was not long before the country surrounding was settled. The first man to open a farm was Samuel Wiley, who came from Vermont in 1855. Thornton Taylor came there in 1856 from the western part of the county. H. A. Christians opened the first blacksmith shop.

The first school was taught by Miss Frances Reeder in the City of Minonk in 1857. The trustees in 1857 divided the township into two districts. This number was increased until now there are seven rural and one graded school in the township. These require an annual levy of more than \$12,000.00 for their maintenance.

The first preaching in the township was done in 1856, by a Presbyterian minister named Frost. The services were frequently held at the hotel conducted by Jonathan Macey. From this beginning the religious interests have grown until there are eight churches in the township, all of them located in town.

There are now two towns in the township; Minonk, founded Nov. 7, 1854, and Woodford, established in 1874.

When the county was divided into townships in 1855, Minonk and Panola were united and the first list of officers is included in the history of Panola. In 1857 the population had increased sufficiently to form Minonk into a separate district. The first officers were as follows: Supervisor, George P. Danforth; clerk, A. L. Pogue; assessor, Charles Dobson; collector, Thomas Reeder; overseer of the poor, Jonathan Macey; commissioners, George P. Danforth, Samuel Clegg, John Vance; justice, William Reeves; constable, Joel B. Pratt, Lewis Fowler; poundmasters, Jonathan Macey, Lewis Fowler, George Danforth; roadmasters, Lewis Fowler, Thornton Taylor, A. H. Danforth.

The first board of school trustees was L. G. Keedy, Charles Dobson and Jackson Parker.

The township is controlled by the following officers: Supervisor, N. L. Davison; clerk, Henry G. Hohlen; assessor, John Hertschuh; collector, John Katzmareck; commissioners, John Meridan, Edmund Joerger, John Waldschmidt;

justices, Alfred Rogers, Jacob Gerdes, J. C. Wickler; constables, J. R. Pray, Ollie White, Robert McKay.

### Roanoke.

The first settlements in Roanoke township were made in the timber southeast of the present site of the village. Here as in the other townships of the county the settlers were slow to occupy the prairie regions. In 1832 Jacob Stephenson, formerly a resident of Christian county, Kentucky, settled in these timber lands. He was followed at a later period by J. W. Ewing, also from Christian county. Joseph Wilkinson, from Indiana, and Joseph Wilson, from Tennessee, were on the scene shortly after the arrival of the predecessors. The first cabin in the township was built by Mr. Stephenson, who sometimes aided his neighbors by doing blacksmithing for them. Joseph H. Causey was another early settler who did blacksmithing. As late as 1850 there were but few houses in the township.

In 1848 Elijah Marshall came to the township from Chester, Vermont. He came by water and drove back in a short time. In 1850 his father, Thomas Marshall, came and settled in the township. Nelson Marshall came at a later date. Hiram Barney also came from Chester, Vt., but did not arrive until about 1852, coming there from Olney, where he had been a short time. The first frame house was built by Elijah Marshall, as was also the second and the first frame barn was also erected by Mr. Marshall. In 1855 a school was opened in the district now known as the Bunch. In 1856 Miss Cynthia Fisher taught just east of Mr. Marshall's farm. This was the first school taught in that part of the county.

From this beginning schools multiplied as rapidly as the needs required. In 1908 there were nine rural and one graded school in the township, expending approximately \$5,500 per annum in their support. In 1909 two rural districts were united with the town district, reducing the number of country schools to seven.

The oldest churches in the township are located in the country. In 1852 the German Baptist now known as the Brethern organized their church, with J. R. and George W. Gish as ministers, and five years later their building was erected. The church grew. R. C. Bryant relates that the building used to be crowded at their services twenty-five years ago.

In 1856 the Baptist church was organized by Elder Sumner Robinson. This church flourished for many years, but was finally abandoned owing to the removal of its members. Six years ago the building was sold to the Amish, and has been remodeled and is now used by them as a place of worship. The Amish have another church in the southern part of the township erected in 1875. The Apostolic Christian church has a large building southwest of Roanoke. It will seat about 700 people and there is a large attendance. The organization has branches in both Eureka and Roanoke.

David T. Fauber, who became one of the founders of the village, came to Roanoke township in 1855. He purchased a farm on which a portion of Roanoke is now located. The land was purchased for \$15 per acre, and is now part of the most valuable property in town. The residence formed for many years a landmark in the village, being located on Broad street. It was built in 1851 by William Front, and remained there until a few years ago, when it was removed from between the bakery and tailor shop. The name of Mr. Fauber is very intimately connected with the early history of Roanoke. Four of the children still reside in Roanoke, Mrs. Jennie Heppard, Mrs. Barbara Cox, J. W. Fauber and E. D. Fauber.

The name of Peter Kennell has been closely identified with the financial interests of the township. He settled there half a century ago and has amassed great wealth.

In 1853 Gideon Jeter moved to this county and settled in Roanoke township. Later he moved to Greene township. At the time he came the prairie was practically unsettled

and one could look across it for miles without seeing a house. Deer were frequently seen and it was still a pioneer region. Of the children of Mr. Jeter, but one, James Jeter, now resides in th county.

One of the most prominent families in Roanoke was that of the Gishes. George Gish was born in Virginia in 1825, and in '48 came to Indiana, where he lived until 1850, when he came to the vicinity of Roanoke. He lived there until a few years before his death, when he moved to Green township. He was a minister of the Dunkard church. His death occurred in 1894. The most prominent members of his family are T. W. and L. C. Gish, the former of whom was sheriff and later both sheriff and treasurer.

Garmon Gish also came from Roanoke, Virginia, at the same time George came and also settled in Roanoke. Later he became sheriff of the county and for many years was connected with county affairs, either as official or deputy.

Chrisley and Abraham Gish also came from Virginia to make their home in the new settlement near where Roanoke now stands. They were brothers to George and Garmon.

Chrisley Gish, or Uncle Chrisley, as he was familiarly called, was the oldest of those who came to Woodford county. He was the father of Rufus and John Gish, both of whom were Dunkard ministers. John Gish suggested the name, Roanoke, as appropriate for the new township and the name was later adopted by the village.

Joseph and William Gish were also pioneers in this township. The former still resides in Illinois, but the latter moved a few years ago to Nebraska, where both he and his wife were killed in a tornado.

In July, 1851, John A. Woltzen landed in Peoria and settled across the river in East Peoria. He lived there until the next spring, when Mr. Woltzen died. The family then moved onto the prairie in Roanoke township. There were five sons, Albert, Simon, Henry, John and Ede Woltzen. Of these, Simon and Henry were for many years identified with

the business affairs of Benson. Albert was for sometime supervisor from Roanoke township.

Another family that has been well known in the county was that of Samuel Peterson, who came to Roanoke township in 1858, from the state of New Jersey. He later came to Benson, and built the first elevator there in 1874. He lived to be 87 years of age and at the time of his death was an extensive land owner. He was considered the wealthiest man in Benson. Of his children, Simon, S. L. Peterson and Mrs. James Jeter still reside in the county.

In 1855 the county was divided and the name Roanoke was given to the township, it being suggested by John Gish in honor of Roanoke, Virginia, his old home. April 3rd of that year the first township election was held, resulting in the selection of the following: Supervisor, David S. Brown; clerk, James Stephenson; assessor, John H. Gish; collector, Benjamin Sanborn; highway commissioners, Samuel Stitt, Emerald Fisher and Joseph Brubaker; constables, Charles Stoller and Joseph Gish; magistrates, Garmon Gish and John Franz.

Thirty votes were cast at that election. The country districts grew gradually until the completion of the railroad, when the growth became much more rapid.

The present officers are as follows: Supervisor, C. F. Yeck; clerk, J. W. Fauber; assessor, J. E. Woltzen; collector Arthur Veuve; commissioners, John Beer, Jr., John Schla-bach, Wm. Zeiger; justices, W. A. Poreh, E. M. Cox; constables, J. W. Fauber, W. F. Brown.

### **Linn.**

Linn township, which was named in honor of the Linn family, was settled somewhat later than Cazenovia on the west, but more than a decade earlier than Clayton on the east. Probably the first family to settle in Linn township was that of Harrison Hollenback, who came from Ohio, in 1840. He was soon after followed by George Hollenback, who

lived across the line of Marshall county with his father, Daniel Hollenback. They came there from Ohio in 1835, making the journey in wagons, cooking and camping on the way. Daniel Hollenback later moved to Minonk, where he resided at the time of his death. A short time after 1844, when George came, he was followed by Jacob Hollenback. The latter still resides in Woodford county, being of a ripe old age.

These were soon followed by William and Simeon Linn, and by John P. Davison, who was a member of the Davison family so prominently named in the history of Clayton township.

Amos West, Alfred Coombs, Samuel Jackman, H. Simpson, John and Isaac Fisher, Joseph Martin, Benjamin Wilson, William Parks and Lewis Wyanteer were the earliest settlers.

West of Benson in Linn township we find a region that is now called the Tjaden settlement, from the number of Tjadens who own and occupy land in that vicinity. Jacob H. Tjaden came to that township in 1857, and purchased a farm. He was the father of Heika, John, Menka, Henry, Jacob, Ludwig and Hermon Tjaden. John F., represented Linn township on the board of supervisors for several years. Ludwig Tjaden is at present supervisor. Another family of the same name came there at an early date. George Tjaden was the first representative of this family. Charles Tjaden of Low Point is the only child of this pioneer who still resides in the county.

In 1855 Wirt Folkers came to Linn township from Germany. He settled on Section 16, which was the school section. Of this family, but two sons, Charles and John Folkers, both of Clayton township, reside in the county. Both are well advanced in age, and are able to tell many stories of pioneer life. Charles Folkers remembers that when they planned to go onto the prairie, their Germantown friends told them they could not be induced to go onto the



prairie if they were given an eighty. Time soon proved that the prairie land was far better than the timbered hills. The winters then were much more severe than now, and he remembers that for three months he did not have his team hitched to anything but a sled. Another brother Fred, was killed in a runaway accident.

Among the other early settlers from Germany were Folkert Monk, who also came in 1855, and Eilert Harms, who settled in Linn township in 1856.

William and Thomas Jury were among the pioneers, but both have within recent years passed away. Bazil, Josiah and Richard Turner were also well known settlers. Marshall Smilie is another of the pioneers, and Weldon Smilie, well known in Clayton, formerly resided in Linn.

Rowland Davison came from Groveland and settled near the present site of the Washington school.

In 1855 Clayton and Linn townships elected the following as the first corps of township officials: Supervisor, Isaac Fisher; collector, John B. Fisher; overseer of the poor, Harrison Simpson; assessor, William Jury; clerk, Jesse Pickard; commissioners, James M. Martin and Cyrus Acres; constable, Angus Thom. This union of townships was maintained until 1859, when the population was sufficient to divide.

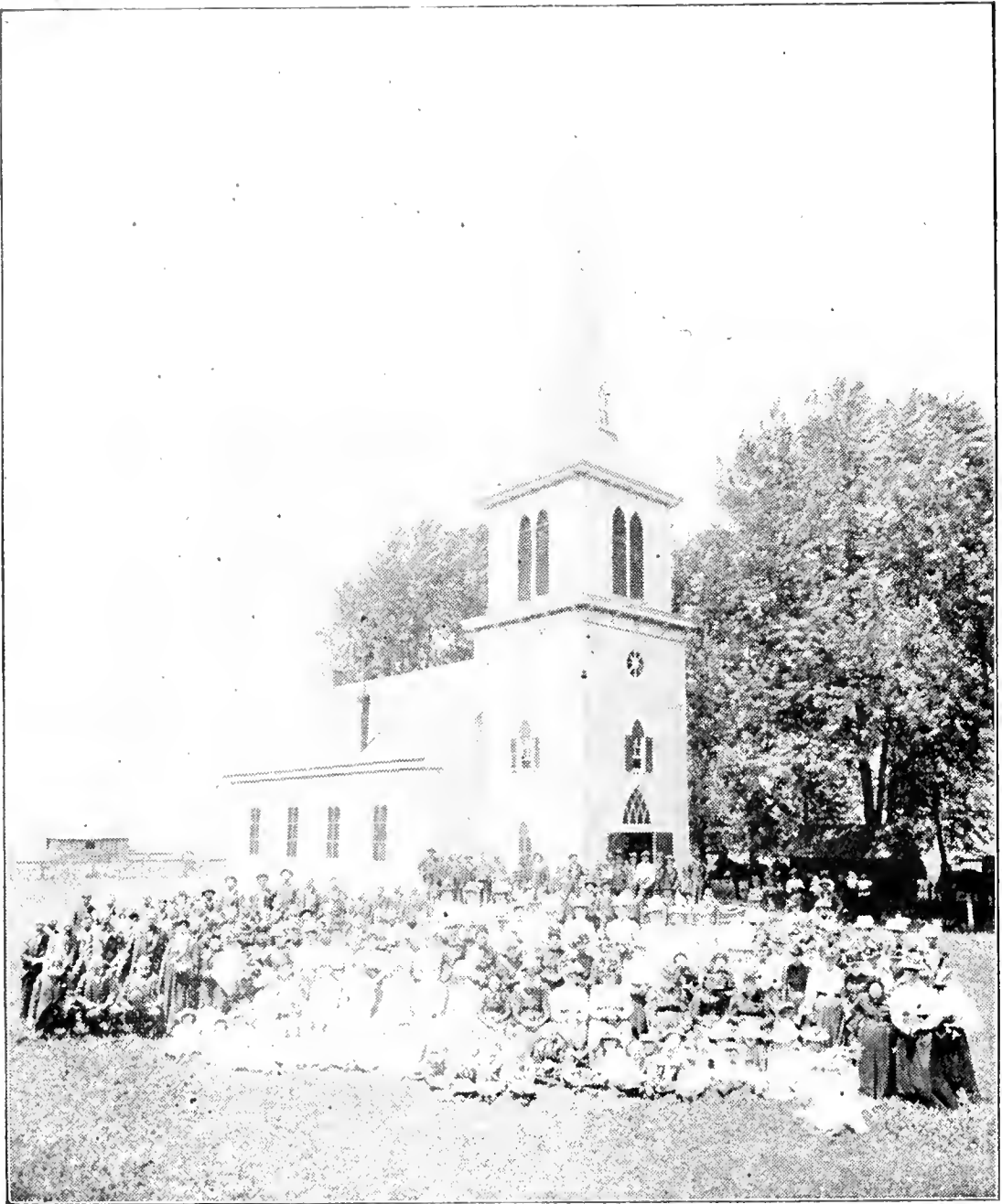
The present list of township officials is as follows: Supervisor, Ludwig Tjaden; clerk, Ed. Underwood; collector, William Damerell; commissioners, John Geyman, Brachter Flohr, Henry Matter; justice, W. T. Wallace; constable, William Reinken.

The first school in the township was held in 1852, and it is known as the Vernon school. The system has met with satisfactory growth. There are now nine schools in the township, expending annually about three thousand dollars for their maintenance.

The religious interests of the township are looked after by two Lutheran churches. In 1860 a number of German Lutherans went to Rev. Heid of the Lutheran church in Pe-



TRINITY GERMAN LUTHERAN CHURCH.



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH.

oria with a plea for pastoral care. Their petition was granted, and a member presented the new organization two acres of land and a house on Panther creek in Roanoke township for a meeting place. In 1863 40 acres of land were purchased and the present church was erected. The other church was then used as a school house. The first pastor was P. F. Wanke. Since the erection of the present building numerous changes and improvements have been made. The present pastor, Rev. D. M. Ficken, has served his charge longer than any other pastor in the county. He came to that church in 1879, and has been in constant service for more than thirty years.

In October, 1871, a second Lutheran church was organized and was affiliated with the church at Secor until 1874, when Pastor Carl Weber, of Gilbert, Penn., was called to the charge. The next pastor was Theo. Pissel, who served the church faithfully for nineteen years. January, 1899, the present pastor, Rev. J. B. Graupner, formerly of Mt. Carroll, Ill., took the position. During ten years he has faithfully served his church in that capacity.

### **Panola.**

Panola township geographically coincides with the congressional township which is designated as township 27 north, range 2 east of the 3rd Principal Meridian. It is therefore a full township. There were few settlers in that vicinity prior to the building of the Illinois Central railroad. As in other regions thru which the Central passed, the completion of the road was the signal for its rapid settlement.

In 1836 John Brewer came to the township and became the first actual settler. It was not until 1851 and '52 that he was followed by others. George W. Kingston settled there in 1851 and Edward Waldron and family came in 1852. Dennis Sharp was an early settler, and continued to make his home there for many years.

William Crosley came there in 1854, and F. Y. Barnard moved to the township from Greene about the same time,

Robert McClelland came a year later and was chosen the first member of the board of supervisors from Panola township. In a short time William Tompkins came from New York, James Dye, from Virginia, and Henry Saltsman from New York. Jacob C. Myers and his brother, O. P. A. Myers, who had previously lived in Greene township, came to Panola in 1855 and '56. Levi Hodson came from Tazewell county so that by the close of 1855 there were sixteen families.

When the county was organized into townships in 1855, two townships, Minonk and Panola, were united in a single precinct, and at the first election chose the following officers: Supervisor, Robert A. McClelland; assessor, William Tompkins; clerk, Horace G. Allen; overseer of the poor, William A. Crosley; highway commissioners, Francis I. Barnard, Joseph Hanna, Thomas Patterson; constables, William H. Brewer and Charles Dobson; magistrates, Samuel G. Lewis and Samuel Work; overseer of roads, James Dye. This union of townships continued until 1857, when Minonk was separated from Panola, the population at that time having become sufficient to warrant such a separation.

The first school in Panola township was taught by Jane Nesmith in 1857. The building was erected in the village at a cost of \$600. From that time the number of schools increased as the growing population demanded. The township has ten schools with more than four thousand dollars expended annually in the cause of education.

The township has the following officers: Supervisor, Theobald Stimpert; clerk, William Oberlander; assessor, Lewis Kingdon; collector, C. W. Major; commissioners, John Krug, Dan Longman, justices, N. S. de Vries, Ed. Burroughs; constables, Almond Drury, Michel Danner.

### **Montgomery and Kansas.**

Montgomery and Kansas townships occupy the southern part of Woodford county, and each has a broken boundary line. Altho of irregular shape Montgomery is almost the equivalent of a full congressional township, its area being thirty-six square miles. The latter has an area slightly great-

er than half a township. This territory is crossed by the Mackinaw river and several of its branches, and a large area is covered with timber. While much of this has been cleared, there is still much of the land that is not under cultivation.

Kansas is one of the townships of the county that has no towns within its borders, and has never had a postoffice. The region was settled at an early date, and within a few years a number of families had been attracted to the region. As early as 1828 Robert and Samuel Phillips came to Illinois and shortly after settled in Woodford county. James Phillips also came a little later. The former of these died in 1835 and was the first death of which we have any record in that vicinity. Prominent among the names of the early settlers stands that of Carlock. In 1833 Abraham W. Carlock came to the vicinity, and a year later was followed by his brother. These pioneers came from Tennessee, as did Isaac Allen and Zachary Brown. Among the names of Carlock are the following descendants of these worthy pioneers: John J. and Winton, sons of Reuben Carlock, and John G., William and A. H., sons of Abraham Carlock. The little town across the line in McLean bears the family name. Zachary Brown came to the county in the early thirties and was later followed by his brother James. Two sons of the former, Eli S. and Warren Brown remained in the county while another son, Ellis, lived in McLean. When Mr. Brown came to the vicinity there was no house between his cabin and Bloomington. James, William and John Benson were settlers who came before the breaking out of the Black Hawk war, as James and John took part in that struggle, as did also James V. Phillips, Samuel Kirkpatrick. Thomas and Elisha Dixon came from Ohio at a very early date. Adam Moore and his father, William C. Moore, were pioneers in the county. Daniel Allison came from Ohio in 1831 and settled near Farnisville. Marvin and James Allison, who have been widely known throout the county, were his sons. Lewis Stephens came from Ohio in 1833 and purchased land. His son, Adam

Stephens, has been closely identified with the political life of his township, having represented Montgomery on the board of supervisors. James Vance came from Christian county, Kentucky, and when he settled there in 1835 found a number of families there before him. Christian and Peter Farni, whose names figured so largely in the history of Farnisville, were natives of France. Peter Farni, of Eureka, is a son of the former. Joseph Gingerich, who came in 1833 was associated with Peter Farni in building the saw mill on the Mackinaw. James Harlan came from Kentucky, in 1833. He was the father of J. N. Harlan who lived in Eureka and bought stock there and grain in Cruger.

Mortimer Robinson came from Ohio in 1838, and in 1842 moved from Tazewell county to Montgomery township. He was the father of H. M. and James Robinson. The former is the most extensive stock raiser in the county, as well as one of its wealthiest men. His business requires many hundreds of acres of land in the southern part of Woodford county, and his shipments are heavy.

The pioneer preacher of this vicinity was Rev. John Dunham, who proclaimed the gospel both in Kansas and Montgomery townships. The first church was organized at the home of James Vance under the leadership of Rev. Isaac Newell, in 1838. This was the first Baptist church in the county. Another pioneer minister was Rev. Abner Peeler, who was both preacher and teacher. His name holds a prominent place in the history of the Christian church in this county. Among other good works, he was the organizer of the Christian church at Roanoke. James Wells was another of the early leaders in the religious life of the people in the southern part of the county. He frequently preached and was for a number of years superintendent of a Sunday school near the present site of Goodfield. Theodore Haze preached for the United Brethren near that place for many years. Their church was built about 1866.

Jacob Simpson, father of H. H. Simpson, came at a later date with Elias and Adam Neff. Mr. Simpson reports

that as late as 1850 he saw as many as twenty-five deer in a single herd.

Andrew Galbreath was another who came at an early date. A family that has had much to do with the growth of the southern parts of the county is that of Finley. The first of these was James Finley, who came here prior to the organization. He was a member of the first grand jury ever chosen in the county. Andrew Galbreath was chosen as a member of the first petit jury in 1841. Later John and Robert Finley came, and finally John Finley, Sr. James and George Finley followed in the steps of their forerunners.

The first school in Montgomery township was taught by Mary Ann Brown in 1843-'44, in a log house. Prior to this Rev. Abner Peeler had taught a school across the line in McLean county, which was attended by a large number of children from Kansas township. It was not until about 1850 that a school house was built in Kansas, altho the children had school advantages prior to that time. The township now has four schools that are maintained at an annual cost of about \$1,600. Montgomery township now has six schools. Prior to 1908 there were eight schools, but in that year the new consolidated school at Congerville was completed, and the schools in district 109, 112 and 113 were abandoned. The school building in Congerville is the first consolidated school in Woodford county. It was erected at a cost of about ten thousand dollars. Three teachers are employed, with J. C. Whetzel as principal. High school work has been introduced and the attendance is quite large. Goodfield also has a graded school. A neat two-room brick structure was erected in 1907.

The earliest business enterprise was a blacksmith shop, one being conducted by a man named Craig in Kansas township, and another being opened in Montgomery township but a short time afterward.

Montgomery township was organized at the time of the division of the county into townships and James Vance was first supervisor. The name for the new township was sug-



gested by John Wells who was at one time a resident. Kansas township was originally a part of Palestine township, but was separated in 1859. Mr. Vance, who was still supervisor, suggested the name of Kansas for the newly organized township. The first postoffice was at Farnisville, but it was not continued a great while. There was none after that until the completion of the railroad when offices were soon established at both Goodfield and Congerville.

John Wells conducted a saw mill on Hohulin's place near where Goodfield now stands, and James Wells made all the coffins needed in that vicinity. Another feature of Montgomery township was Clark's quarry, which was on Henry I. Clark's farm. Many a house in the southern part of the county has a cellar walled with stones from this quarry or a foundation built from there.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Palestine.

**P**ALESTINE township, which derives its name from the Holy Land, was settled at a very early date. The southern part of the territory along Panther creek was settled first.

Francis M. Willis came from the vicinity of Eureka about 1832, but found that he had been preceded by Josiah and Campbell Moore and also by James and Aaron Richardson, the former of whom came in 1830, and the latter the year following. The Moores built a mill, which eventually passed into the hands of Mr. Willis. As mentioned more fully in the history of Bowling Green, that town was the first in the township, being laid out in 1836 by Francis M. Willis, while Aaron Richardson laid out an addition in 1837.

One of the most striking figures in the early history of Palestine was Rev. James Robeson for years known far and wide as "Uncle Jimmy" Robeson. He came from Christian county, Kentucky, and settled first in Walnut Grove in 1835. Later he opened a store at Bowling Green. He began preaching when he was twenty years old, and preached for seventy years. He died in 1888 aged 91 years. He was the father of ten children, Polly A. Jennings, Martha P. Wolley, Elizabeth J. Hughes, W. H., Thomas P., J. W., John E., C. A., M. A. and Albert E. Robeson. C. A. Robenson was sheriff of Woodford county, and his son, E. E. Robeson is a rising attorney at Eureka.

Samuel Arnold and Allen Hart were also pioneer set-

tlers, the latter being the first supervisor from Palestine township. He came from New York in 1836, and settled in what was then known as the Palestine Prairie. William Lucas came from Kentucky in 1840, John G. Mohr came from Germany in 1836. Ephriam and Samuel Potter came from the east, being born in Carolina. Among the later comers who have played a prominent part in the history of the township can be mentioned the following: Joseph Frey, Sr., came to Palestine in 1858. Since that time the family has been one of the most prominent in the county. The children were Joseph Frey, who resided near and in Secor for many years; William Frey, Mains, Iowa; Mrs. Marion Potter, Secor. At the present time his grandson, C. W. Frey, is a prominent citizen and business man of Secor. William Billinger came from Eaton, Ohio, with Joseph Frey, the journey being made overland in a wagon. Anderson Van Seyoc came to Woodford county in 1835 and has since become an extensive land owner. He was supervisor for several years. John A. Van Seyoc, his son, was widely known in the county for many years.

John Colburn came to the township in 1842, coming originally from Grafton county, New Hampshire, altho he made several stops on his journey westward. His son, Richard O. Colburn, had a prominent place among the farmers and stock raisers of the county. The sons of the latter, William, John and Cecil, still farm in the vicinity. Byron is deputy county clerk, while Cary was for some years connected with educational work in Japan.

Christian Deimer came in 1855, and settled on the farm now owned by his son, L. R. Deimer. The latter occupied the farm himself for many years, but recently moved to Secor.

As suggested in the history of Greene township a number of representatives of the Armstrong family reside in Palestine. W. H. Armstrong lives near Secor and is a member of the Board of Directors of the public school,

John Armstrong is also a resident of Secor, one of his sons, Clarence, being in business there. Mrs. Polly Ann Armstrong still resides there, as do also a number of the younger members of that family.

Merritt, Green and William Patterson came at a later date, but have been identified with movements for the advancement of the county since their coming.

John Bloodsworth is one of the pioneers, coming from England at an early date and working in this and Tazewell counties. He now owns a farm in Roanoke and another in Palestine townships.

Among the later comers is one of the most widely traveled men in the county, Thomas Jones. A native of England, the years of his early manhood were spent on the sea, where he made a number of voyages. Since coming to Palestine township he has resided southeast of Secor.

Among the churches in the country may be mentioned the Christian church erected on the prairie in 1874. The German Evangelical built in 1875 and the Centennial church erected by the Methodists and United Brethren in 1876. Rev. James Robeson and Rev. John Oatman were the pioneer preachers of the township. Another minister whose name has been connected with the township for many years, was A. Q. Wilson. He has but recently answered the summons to go into the great beyond. He has been connected with the church of Christ for almost a life time. His widow still resides in Secor.

The officers are as follows: Supervisor, Wm. Colburn; clerk, William Dehority; assessor, O. J. Gish; commissioners, J. W. Brown, John VanSeyoc; collector, H. R. Brown; justices, B. E. Tribbey, Joseph Woods, Sr.; constables, G. E. Heinrich and Walter S. Sparks.

### **Clayton.**

Clayton township belongs to that part of the county which was of more recent settlement. Sixty years ago it was an unsettled prairie, today its prairie lands are worth

more than \$200 per acre, since they lie in one of the richest sections of the county.

The first actual settlement made within the borders of Clayton township was by John Linn, who belonged to the family of Linns who settled the township which bears their name. This settlement occurred in 1854, and shortly afterward James Livingston came and made his home in the township. As so frequently occurred, the coming of one member of a family brought others and in 1857, Michael Livingston, a brother of James, came



**D. H. DAVISON.**

from New Hampshire and settled in the township. Other settlers soon followed and at once began to improve their farms, humble tho these improvements were. Milton Hicks and Jefferson Shepler were among these early comers.

The year following witnessed the coming of the Davison family from New York. There were four of the Davison brothers who came to Illinois. Three of them settled in Woodford county, the fourth, Asa, settled in Fulton county and became editor of the Canton Register. In 1855 John M. Davison settled in Clayton township, and two years later was followed by Norman L. Davison. The other brother, Rowland, had come at an early date from New York for the purpose of investigating Illinois, and purchased government land near Groveland. In 1856 he moved to Linn township. The Davisons have been closely identified

with the interests and growth of the county. They descended from patriotic parents, their grandfather having been a soldier in the revolutionary war. John M. Davison was elected school trustee at the first election in the township. Three of the Davison family have served as county officers, P. H. Davison as treasurer, D. W. Davison as coroner, and D. H. Davison has served all told 30 years as surveyor.

The year of 1855 witnessed the coming of many settlers. Among these was Jacob McChesney, who came from Rensselaer county, New York. He still resides in the county having retired from the farm, and is living in Minonk. His son, Edward D. McChesney, still resides in the township. The same year that these came to Woodford Wait Uphoff came to Peoria from Germany and two years sons, Adam W., Bart W., John W. and Bernhard W. Uphoff. These with numerous grand-children have been closely connected with the farming community about Benson.

Henry Lohnes was among the early settlers from Rensselaer county, New York, being attracted here by reports of the productiveness of the soil.

In 1856 Henry Memmen came to the township, having come from Germany to Peoria in the early '50's. He resided there for a short time before moving out to the prairies. His widow, who now resides in Benson, has many pleasant memories of the little house that was their first home in this county. There were pioneer hardships to be sure, but there were pleasures, too, that counter-balanced these. Other settlers of this region were Josiah Gardner, Samuel Knowles and Jacob Robinson.

In 1858 F. D. Learned came to the township from Lee county, having originally come from New Hampshire. For many years he identified himself with the business and political life of the county. He has been succeeded by his son, F. E. Learned.

In 1857 the Tallyn family came to the western part of the township, Joseph and Anthony Tallyn coming from

Kickapoo in Peoria county, within a few months of each other.

William Worthington came in 1855. Another family that has taken a prominent place in the life of the county has been that of John G. Hindert, who came to Marshall county from Germany in 1854. In 1858 they settled in the eastern part of Clayton township on the farm occupied by Mrs. U. J. Hindert. When Mr. Hindert came to this county, Minonk had but twenty-four houses. His daughter, Mrs. Barney Brockling, resides across the road from her father's farm, while his sons, George, Joseph and John Hindert, are later came to the township. He was the father of four residents of Minonk township. A later settler, whose family has been prominent in the affairs of the county, was Adam Eckhart, whose sons, J. E., Henry and Edward, are connected with the business affairs of Benson. That the growth was at first gradual, may be concluded from the fact that when Peter Gommels settled there in 1869, there were but few houses. These were small and frequently had but two rooms. The prairies were covered with sloughs and ponds in rainy seasons, that made a great deal of waste land. Now the entire township is drained, and practically all is under cultivation.

The early political life of Clayton township was in connection with Linn, as they did not have a sufficient number of inhabitants to form two voting precincts in 1855. For this reason the minutes of the first meeting of the board of supervisors at Metamora April 16th, of that year, show Linn and Clayton townships represented by a single supervisor, Isaac Fisher. This did not continue a great while, however, for in 1859 the townships were divided. The first officers of Clayton elected that year were as follows: Supervisor, J. P. Robinson; Clerk, Henry Lohnes; assessor, James Livingston; collector, J. Forney; poor master, Thomas Shreeves; magistrates, F. P. Tuthill, and F. H. Lockwood; commissioners, Hiram Livingston, William Linn and C. N. Darling; constables, C. H. Robinson and W. Cole.

The first church to organize in the township was southeast of the present site of Benson.

In 1859 the Clayton Baptist church was founded by Rev. M. L. Fuller. Services were first held at the home of James Huxtable. Later services were held at the school house. The organization gave promise of growth, and in 1866 a church was erected two miles east and one mile south of the present site of the town. The organization had about thirty-five members, and the following winter a large number were converted. Their first pastor was Rev. William Parker, who was followed by his brother, Rev. Moses Parker. Services continued to be held there until about twenty years ago, when they were abandoned, and the church was moved away. The site of the church is marked by the Clayton cemetery.

On the establishment of the town, churches multiplied and the new structures were located in town.

The first school in the township was taught by P. H. Davison, but there was no school house at that time. A year later, in 1855 a little school house was erected with Jacob McChesney as teacher. This later became known as the Jefferson school. In 1856 the township was divided into nine districts, altho some of these had no school for several years. There are now eight rural and one graded school in Clayton, and they expend \$6,500 annually for school purposes.

The northern part of the township has been known for many years as Yankeetown. The road east from the Washington school house was bordered by houses erected by settlers from the eastern states, hence the appropriateness of the name. For many years there was a postoffice at Yankeetown, but on the institution of the rural mail service this office was abandoned and the patrons were attached to one of the Minonk routes. The office was in the home of P. H. Davison and later of his son, Paul. The mail was carried from Minonk by a carrier.

The following are the township officers: Supervisor,



Bartlett W. Uphoff; clerk, J. W. Heiken; assessor, Frank Vogel; collector, William Reinken; justice of the peace, J. C. Sildorff and D. Davis; constables, Emm Oltman and W. C. Monk; commissioners, Joseph Bucklear, Mike Fisher, W. F. Uphoff.

### Greene.

Greene is one of those townships that has no town located within its borders, altho there were stores there at an early date. The timber lands along Panther Creek proved an inviting field for early settlers, who believed that lands on which timber would not grow were not fit for farming. The township was settled at an early date, but was not settled rapidly. In 1840 there were but a dozen families within its borders. The first settlers came to that region in 1829, from the vicinity of Overton, Tenn. William, Allen, Winslow and Almira Patrick were among those, who made a permanent settlement. Amasa Stout settled there but only remained a short time. Of the former family, two, William and Winslow Patrick, lie buried in the cemetery on the west bank of Panther creek. The latter met his death while assisting young Bilbrey, who came in 1830, in the erection of his cabin. His head was crushed between the wagon and a log. Mr. Bilbrey remained there several years before moving to Money Creek in McLean county. In 1831 the first child born in the township was born to them. His daughter, Mrs. Armstrong, who resides in Secor, tells many interesting stories of their pioneer life, altho she only remembers them as they were told to her. The early comers met with many trying experiences. They had to build their own cabins, and while they were doing this, they slept in rail pens, covered with slough grass. There were dangers from exposure, from privation and from the Indians, altho the latter never really molested them. The Black Hawk war came on and stories of massacres created a feeling of dread among isolated settlers, and caused them to seek shelter in the older communities.

In 1832 Thomas McCord, who was a relative of the early

comers, came to the township. Originally he had come from the same place in Tennessee, but had lingered on the way. Abram Hahn and Jacob Kindelsbeyer came from Ohio, and F. Y. Barnard, from Tennessee. Others followed slowly, but the real growth of the township did not begin until the construction of the Illinois Central. Prior to 1854 there was a postoffice at the home of Francis Y. Barnard, known as Josephine, but upon the completion of the Central road it was transferred to Panola.

The name of Armstrong has figured prominently in the history of the township. John and Alex Armstrong were the pioneers, and had much to do with the development of the neighborhood. Among the younger generation were, William, Garret, Alex, Steven, James, Rankin, John and Miles Armstrong. There are still four representatives of the family residing in Greene, John, Festus, Henry and Grant. Several reside in Secor, among them being Mrs. Rankin Armstrong, John and Miles Armstrong. These with their children, have been well known in that vicinity for many years.

In 1854 John Cauley came to Greene township from Roanoke, Virginia, and in 1856 they were followed by Andrew Ruddell. The widow of the latter still lives in the county, being a resident of Benson.

Michael Evey came to Woodford county from Ohio in 1852. The family originally came from Pennsylvania, but had remained a short time in Ohio before coming on to Illinois. John Evey, a son of Michael, came on the train with the women and children of the party, which was made up of twelve families. The men drove overland to their destination. The family of Mr. Evey settled in Greene township where they resided many years. Among the children, who were well known in the county, were, Mrs. William Meginnis, Mrs. John Frantz, Michael Evey, Jr., David and John M. Evey. Of the family, S. M. Evey, a son of the last named, is the sole representative in Woodford county, and still resides

in Greene township, where he is a prosperous farmer.

James Huxtable came to the county in the latter part of the fifties, and at once took a prominent part in the affairs of the community, being especially interested in the work of the Clayton church. His children have been identified with the political and business life of the county in many ways, being especially connected with the interests of Clayton and Greene. One of his sons, Thomas, held the office of county clerk at the time of his death.

Sebastian Vogel settled in the township in 1857. He was the father of Frank, John, William, Tony, Henry, Joseph and Sebastian Vogel, Mrs. Caroline Kapraun and Mrs. Macy Hummell. The descendants of Mr. Vogel occupy a wide scope of territory in the township and own hundreds of acres of its best lands. This region is known as the Vogel settlement.

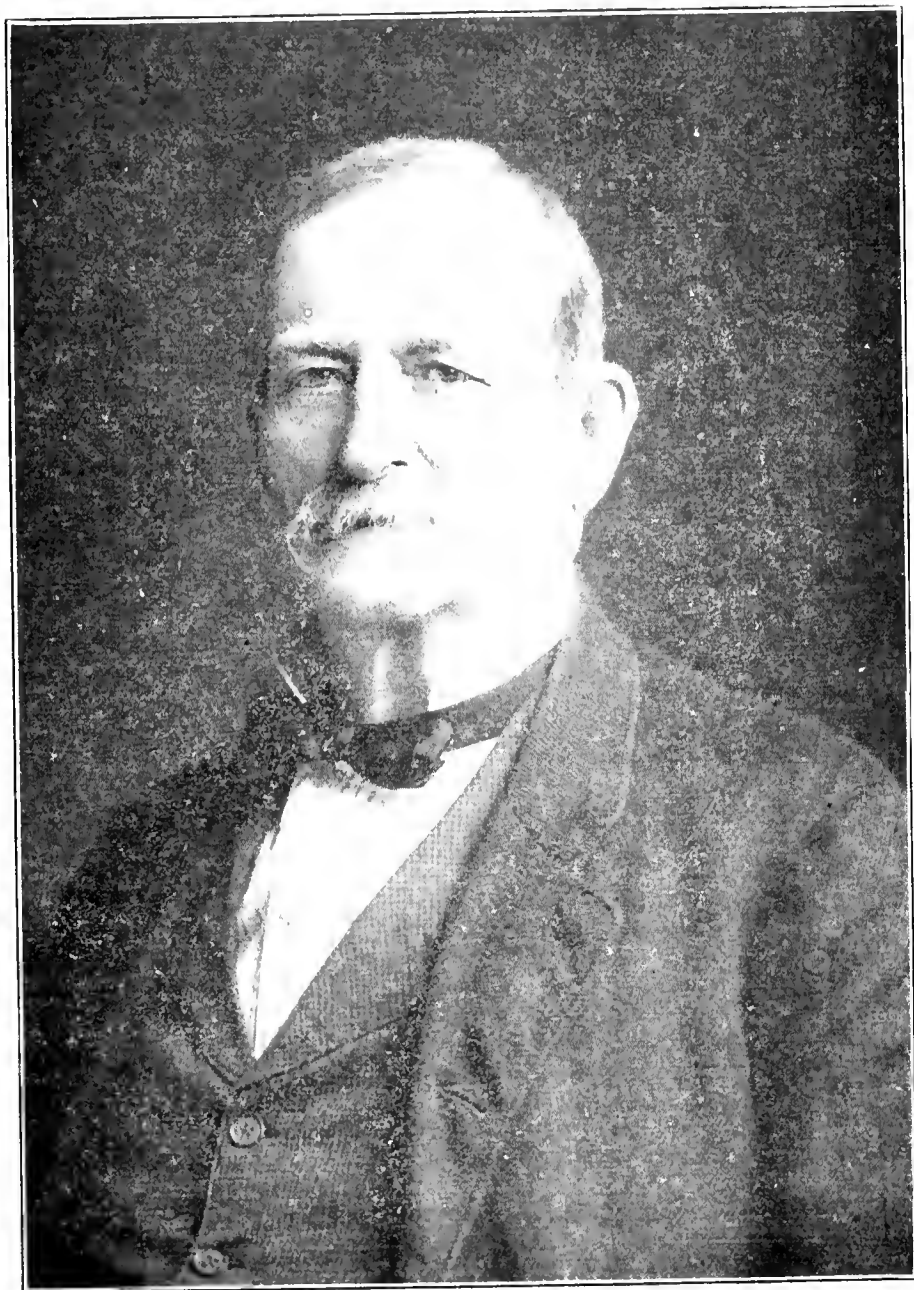
Mathias Williamson came to Greene township from Butler county, Ohio, and settled a mile north of Secor. He had four sons, who still reside in the county, two in Secor and two in El Paso: James A. Williamson, present postmaster of Secor; William N. Williamson, also of that place; John H. and Louis Williamson of El Paso. Other names prominent among early settlers were those of William Marshall, James Miller, Samuel and Richard Patton, Simpson and William McCord. An old settler in the county, altho a more recent comer in the township, is Abbo A. Koerner, who formerly lived between Eureka and Secor.

Judge George W. Patton, who has since won a high position as an attorney and judge, was born in Greene township. He is now judge of the circuit in which Woodford county is located and resides at Pontiac.

Jonathan Wilson came with his father, Nathaniel Wilson, to Metamora in 1835, and moved to Greene township in 1850. He carried the chain while engaged in the surveying of county lines almost seventy years ago. He was quite young at the time, but remembers many experiences met with while he was engaged in the work. They ran across



Giant Tree Found on C. M. Stephenson's Farm in  
Greene Township.



A. H. BRUBAKER.

some Indian corn cribs that were nothing more nor less than trenches dug in the ground. Mr. Wilson has made his home in the county since that time with the exception of the last few years, which have been spent in California. Three of his children, Frank and Ed. Wilson, and Mrs. Emma Kindig still reside in the township.

Wm. W. Wood settled in Greene township in 1856. His son, J. G. Wood, has resided in the county the entire time, with the exception of four years. He now resides in Secor.

A. H. Brubaker came there in 1856 and became a prominent figure in the political life of the township and county. He has held numerous prominent positions, having been supervisor several terms and in 1886 was elected to the state legislature. In 1884 he moved to Benson and has been closely connected with its business interests, being now at the head of the Farmers' Bank. Mr. Brubaker was the first man to haul a load of tile onto a Greene township farm. His plan was ridiculed by some of his neighbors, but its success soon led them to follow his example.

The Hammers family also came to Greene township at an early date, Joseph, Samuel and James Hammers being among the pioneers. Isaac Hammers, a younger member of the same family, is now a well known attorney of El Paso, and at one time represented this district in the state legislature.

During the '50's a store was conducted near the cemetery on Panther creek. It was owned and managed by Gabe Woods and as a result the vicinity was known as Gabetown. A saw mill was operated there by James Carroll. There was also another store conducted by Isaac Hammers and William Crosley, but it was moved to Panola, when the Central was completed.

In 1855 Greene township was created in the division of the county into townships, the following officers were elected as the first township officary: Supervisor, J. R. Gaston; clerk, G. S. Wood; collector, D. T. Patterson; magistrates, Benjamin Sample and William Harper; constables, J. F. Stephenson and J. F. Mohr.

The first school was taught in a little log school house in 1840, with William Armstrong as the first teacher. This met the needs of the township for many years. In 1856 the Willow Tree school was built. Schools have multiplied since then, until there are now seven schools in the township, with an annual expenditure for school purposes exceeding \$2,500.

There are no churches in the township, altho for a number of years services have been held in the town hall, the Christian, Methodist and Evangelical churches having held services there at various times. In the early days many of the people worshipped in what was afterward known as the Clayton Baptist church. Still others formed the beginning of the Panola Baptist church, it being first known as the Willow Tree church. Many of the people worship at the Dunkard church, which is just across the line in Roanoke township. Still others worship in the adjoining towns.

In 1876 the town hall was erected near the center of the township, and has since served the purpose of a general meeting place for the people. It is also used as a place of worship.

Altho Greene township has no city in its boundries, it has sent forth an unusually large number of men prominent in political life. Among these may be named the following: A. H. Brubaker and Isaac B. Hammers, members of the legislature; T. W. and L. C. Gish, sheriffs; L. C. Gish, treasurer; G. W. Patton, circuit judge; Thomas Huxtable, county clerk; L. H. and F. A. VanAlstine, circuit clerks. These were not all residents of Greene township at the time of their election, but had at one time resided there.

The township officers are as follows: Supervisor, Frank Vogel; clerk, W. H. Kindig; assessor, C. E. Miller; collector, J. W. Cawley; commissioners, Frank Hummel, John H. Swatsley, Ben Bohlander, H. A. Redenius; justices, C. E. Miller, J. J. Kapraun.

Mr. and Mrs. V. Houseworth are among the oldest residents of Greene township. Mrs. Houseworth, whose name was Reedy prior to her marriage, has lived on their home farm fifty-two years.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Hardships and Pleasures.

**T**HE broad fertile prairies of Woodford county, dotted with handsome farm houses, with here and there a prosperous town, give little sign of the hardships endured by the pioneer in bringing them under cultivation. These can never be fully realized by a generation surrounded by the comforts and luxuries of the modern farm home. The early settlers aspired to nothing better than the log cabin, frequently made from rough, unhewn logs, notched and laid together in a hurried manner. The cracks left between these logs were stopped with a crude plaster made of clay, mixed with straw and the roof was made of clapboards. Windows were made by cutting out a part of a log or two. In the early cabins these openings were covered with oiled paper, but later some indulged in the luxury of a pane of glass, which was so arranged that it could be taken out for ventilation.

The cabin usually consisted of a single room with a loft reached by a ladder. In one end was a fireplace, the chimney of which was on the outside. It was made with a wooden frame, plastered on each side with a mud plaster. The glowing red fire in the fireplace cast a bright glow over the entire room and served for light as well as heat. Great piles of wood from the neighboring timber supplied the eager flames. Large quantities of fuel were required, for the holes in the walls let in the cold air, chilling the room. It was no uncommon occurrence for the sleeper to awaken on a winter



morning and find his bed covered with snow that had sifted thru the cracks.

The cook stove and range were unknown luxuries, and all cooking was done on the fireplace or in a Dutch oven. In spite of the disadvantages of the fireplace, the housewife could cook dishes that were both healthful and appetizing. Corn bread and johnny cake baked in a Dutch oven have an enviable reputation to this day, while pancakes baked on the hot griddle furnished an appetizing breakfast for the pioneer. Hasty pudding, hulled corn and hominy boiled in the pot with all the savory meats cooked in a dozen different ways furnished a meal fit for a prince. Who has tasted such fare and not wish he was back in the log cabin of the pioneer enjoying the thrifty housewife's cooking with an appetite sharpened by toil.

The fireplace was frequently supplemented by a Dutch oven, which was formed by building a frame work of the size desired, and covering the inside to a considerable thickness with a kind of cement, while the outside was covered with mud. When ready for use a fire was built in the oven until its walls were hot, the temperature being gauged by experience. The fire was then removed, and bread, cake, or pies were put in. The walls retained sufficient heat to bake them to a nicety. Those who depended on the fireplace for baking had an iron pan in which bread or cake was placed. A nice bed of coals was arranged, and the pan placed on them and covered with a lid, over which live coals were scattered. Often potatoes or even corn bread was baked in the hot ashes. The well to do had pots and kettles, but those who were less fortunate roasted their meat on a spit or twig, held over the fire and turned to secure even roasting. Canned fruit was an unknown luxury, for within the memory of older people, glass jars for canning have been introduced. The furnishings of the cabin were almost all hand made. A few simple tools and timber from the neighboring woods supplied all that was necessary for furnishing the usual home for use of the pioneer and his family.

Hardships within were not to be compared with hardships without. Broad prairies untouched by the plow were to be broken. Oxen were used in breaking, five, six or even eight yokes, being attached to a plow, breaking a wide furrow. The driver of an ox team required considerable skill in the management of his oxen. He carried a gad, which consisted of a long pole, at the end of which was a lash. By means of this he could touch up the lazy or refractory ox that was trying to shirk its share of the load. The head yoke was picked from the best trained oxen of the farm, while the raw animals were used as followers. The gad was frequently used to cut off the head of some noisy prairie bird or of a snake that happened to raise its head above the grass.

Snakes formed one of the greatest dangers the settlers had to face. The country was over-run with them. There were numerous varieties and various sizes, and the pioneer was constantly on the lookout for the warning whirl of venomous rattlers. The black and bull snakes and racers were quite large, frequently ten or twelve feet long. The racers possessed great speed, and the black snake had remarkable strength. It was no uncommon occurrence for a settler to do battle with a snake that taxed both his strength and courage before it was dispatched.

The only tombstone in the cemetery at Panola marks the grave of Horace Allen who died as the result of the bite of a deadly copperhead snake. The silent motion of the grass was a warning and the boldest was cautious about approaching until he had determined the direction in which the snake was headed. There were thousands of little snakes that were harmless, but infested every part of the prairies.

The territory that is now so well drained was formerly covered with sloughs and ponds. Hundreds of acres of land now under cultivation were formerly under water a great part of the year. These, together with the slough grass, which was frequently eight or ten feet high presented a serious barrier to a successful breaking of the prairie.

The farmer's stock was in danger from prowling wolves that infested the country. It was even dangerous for a man to be alone on the prairie at night with a pack of hungry wolves on his track. This trouble from wolves was so great that a bounty was offered for a wolf's scalp. Foxes were also frequently found in the timber region but these were never so harmful as wolves, altho a bounty was also offered for a fox scalp. The day of the wolf is past and the fox is now but rarely seen, altho occasionally one is found with her little ones in the timber.

The danger that was feared above all others was the deadly prairie fire. The tall, rank growth of grass was often high enough to effectually conceal a horse and rider. As soon as it became dry, as it usually did in the fall, it afforded an easy means of starting a fire that spread with inconceivable swiftness. The prairie fire can never be adequately pictured by one who has never seen it. The warning glow can be seen for a great distance by night, and the black clouds of smoke, coupled with red flames, create consternation among men and beasts. The roaring of the flames can be heard afar off, and long before the advancing flames arrive, scores of wild animals dash by in their mad flight from the flames which mean certain death to them. Their only hope lies in reaching some stream that may serve as a barrier to the awful advance of the flames. About the only means available for fighting these terrible fires was back firing, in other words starting a fire in advance of the flames, so as to put an impassible barrier of burned prairie grass in its path. These fires frequently covered miles of territory before they could be checked. It was impossible to guard against the ravages of the flames with any degree of security, but it could be done to a certain extent by burning around a claim. A few furrows would be plowed around the farm, then a space would be left large enough to check the advance of a fire, then a few more furrows were plowed. The grass between the plowed portion was fired and the furrows proved an effectual barrier to the spread of the flames. Another

method is described in Prof. Radford's *Old Settler's History of Woodford County*. The settlers of a neighborhood would get together and fire the grass around the borders of their claims. The grass would be fired by one of the party, while the others would keep it in check by the constant use of brushes. A strip was burned over in this manner that was broad enough to check the advance of any ordinary fire. After the sweeping destruction of such a visitor the territory passed over looked like a dreary waste, with here and there the charred carcass of some animal that had not been able to escape from the rapidly advancing enemy. Only after the county became settled and the prairies came under cultivation was the danger from this source removed.

A serious drawback to the pioneer was the distance from the market. Fort Clark, afterward Peoria, and even Chicago were markets to which the pioneer directed his course when in need of supplies, aside from the simplest household necessities. Mills did a thriving business as the farmer depended on them for all his flour and meal, and wheat was one of the leading crops at that time.

The many ponds, sloughs and swampy places, filled with decaying matter, produced its harvest of malaria and ague. The early settler was fortunate if he did not have a siege of one or the other in his family during the year. Home remedies were relied upon to restore the sick.

The seasons were much more severe in the early period than now. The settlement of the prairies, the planting of groves, and the continued cultivation of the soil have served to modify the climate. Snow fell in the winter to a great depth, covering roads and fences and making the whole country appear one vast expanse of snow. It often covered the ground from early winter until spring. In the winter of 1830 and '31 occurred what has ever since been known as the great snow. It began in December and reached a depth of four feet on the level and stayed on the ground until spring. Great numbers of animals died from starvation, while the few settlers scattered here and there suffered many hard-

ships. The broad, unsettled prairies gave an uninterrupted sweep to the storm, which swept across them with terrible fury. Snow storms were often almost blinding, making it extremely difficult for the traveler caught in the storm to find his way. There were few landmarks on the prairie to guide one lost in the storm. Even on a dark night it was easy to become lost. John Brotherhood, who drove a stage thru Hanover, is said to have lost his way and after driving for hours found himself at dawn but a mile from his starting place.

There were few roads and no bridges, and the pioneer traveler had to follow an uncertain trail and ford the streams. The sloughs were miniature swamps, miry, sticky and extremely hard to cross. It was frequently necessary to double teams to cross them.

The modern improvements in machinery were unthot of and the work of the farm was accomplished by the expenditure of a large amount of muscular effort. Harvesting was done by hand. The cradle was used in reaping grain, the cradler being followed by a binder who gathered the grain together and bound it by holding it across his knee. Men acquired great skill in both cradling and binding, but the reaper and self-binder were a welcome introduction as a labor saving improvement. Corn was planted by hand and hoed, while small grains were thrashed on a great floor constructed for that purpose. Neighbors brought their wheat in shocks and it was scattered over this floor and oxen or horses were driven around until the wheat was thrashed out, when the straw was removed and the wheat and the chaff were separated. Later the corn planter, cultivator and separator were introduced, making it possible to cultivate larger farms with less labor. The farmer of today has his riding plow, and riding cultivator, while his hay is loaded with a patent loader, and his harvesting is done by a self-binder. Water is pumped by a wind mill or by the use of a small engine. The old-fashioned plow with the wooden

moldboard has been superseded by the modern highly polished plow.

Probably the first use of steam as a power in the operation of a separator in the county was made by Simon Peterson in the vicinity of Benson more than thirty years ago. Since that time the number of traction engines has increased very rapidly. Horse power in shelling corn has long since been abandoned and the traction engine furnishes the power required. Aside from these are great numbers of other labor saving improvements that tend to lighten the drudgery of farm life.

The clothing worn was home made, the material being linen, jeans and linsey. The thrifty housewife was skillful in the manufacture of this home-made clothing. The wool was carded, spun, woven and dyed at home, the dye used being walnut bark or blue-dye. The flax went thru the process of hatcheling, spinning and weaving. For many years the spinning wheel was a necessity in the home, but it has long since ceased to be regarded as such and is now a curiosity rather than a useful part of the equipment of the household. The sewing machine, now regarded as a necessity, was an unknown luxury in the county for many years after its settlement.

Money was a scarce article, and the settlers' wants were few from necessity. Altho the pioneer suffered many hardships, he had many pleasures as well. These were entered into with the greater zest because there were hardships to be endured. Game was very plentiful, and the hunter found an abundance of choice sport. If he sought small game, there were wild turkeys, prairie chickens, and quail in great numbers. These were easily shot or trapped. The larger game included deer, wolves, foxes and raccoons. The great event in the neighborhood was the ring hunt. This was the forming of a great ring in which all the men and boys took part. The ring was gradually narrowed, the game being slowly driven toward the center. When the game was huddled together, the signal was given and the slaughter be-

gan. Squirrel hunts were also frequently indulged in, and were followed by a feast in which young and old took part.

One of the occasions of a neighborhood gathering was a barn or house raising. The timbers of the early structure were heavy, and the entire community was called in to help in the work. It was a time of merry-making as well as of work, and both men and women entered with keen enjoyment into the jollity of the event.

The old time spelling school was one of the features of the social life of the early days. It was the event of the year and good spellers were known thruout the entire neighborhood. Preparations were made for this event, and many a young person could be seen, days before the match, spending all spare moments in pondering the list of words in the old speller. Many were remarkably skillful in the art of spelling, much more so than at the present time. When schools became more numerous, it was no unusual occurrence for several schools to take part in a joint contest, or for the adherents of one school to challenge the adherents of a neighboring school to a joint match. These occasions were looked forward to with high anticipation by the young people, and advantage was taken of the opportunity offered the sturdy boys to win favor with their sweethearts.

Religious services that were held in the homes of the pioneer were a means of social intercourse as well as of devotion. They brought the people together and they enjoyed these occasional meetings to the utmost. With his modest cabin, boasting of but a single room, the early settler was far more hospitable than the possessor of the modern, commodious home. No stranger who happened to be delayed in his journey or was overtaken by darkness was turned away from the humblest cabin. The public stopping places were few and far between, so that the traveler would have been in a sorry plight had it not been for pioneer hospitality. Visitors were given the beds, while the family slept on the floor. This spirit of hospitality was indicated by the expression: "The latch string hangs on the outside for you." In the

cabin there was always a long wooden latch reaching across the door. A string was attached to it and passed thru a hole in the door above it. With this string the latch could be easily lifted from the outside, while to fasten the door it was only necessary to pull the string, hence the appropriateness of the expression. As the country became more thickly settled the practice of entertaining so freely gradually grew less and less, until today open hospitality is but seldom practiced as formerly.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### Education and Religion.

THE early pioneer, tho far removed from educational institutions, maintained a high intellectual standard. Within a few years after the coming of the first settlers, steps were taken for the education of the youth of that day. Schools sprang up here and there, sometimes in the home of some great hearted pioneer, at other times in a rude log building erected for a school house. These were conducted under trying conditions. The terms were short and the equipment was of the crudest character, yet in spite of disadvantages, the school, coupled with the rough pioneer life, developed the children of the pioneer into stalwart, trustworthy men and women.

The first schools were supported by private contributions or tuition. In some instances the teacher boarded from house to house as a part of his salary. The school houses were built of logs, with a hole cut in the side for light. In one end was a large fireplace, and the seats were near the wall. These consisted of boards sawn from the neighboring timber. Holes were bored in the bottom and pegs were driven in for legs. A board was fastened to the wall and served as a desk. There was little attention paid to the child's comfort. The individual seat with its highly polished desk, and the well lighted school building, heated by steam, were as yet undreamed of luxuries.

It is probable that the first school was taught by William Hoshor in 1831, near Walnut Grove. There was also

one taught at an early day in the barn belonging to Benjamin Williams on the west side of the county.

As the settlers became more numerous, more ample provisions were made for school work and in 1837 the first free school was conducted by Miss Love Morse in the vicinity now known as Cazenovia. From this humble beginning the public school system has developed until every child now has the opportunity of attending school at the public expense.

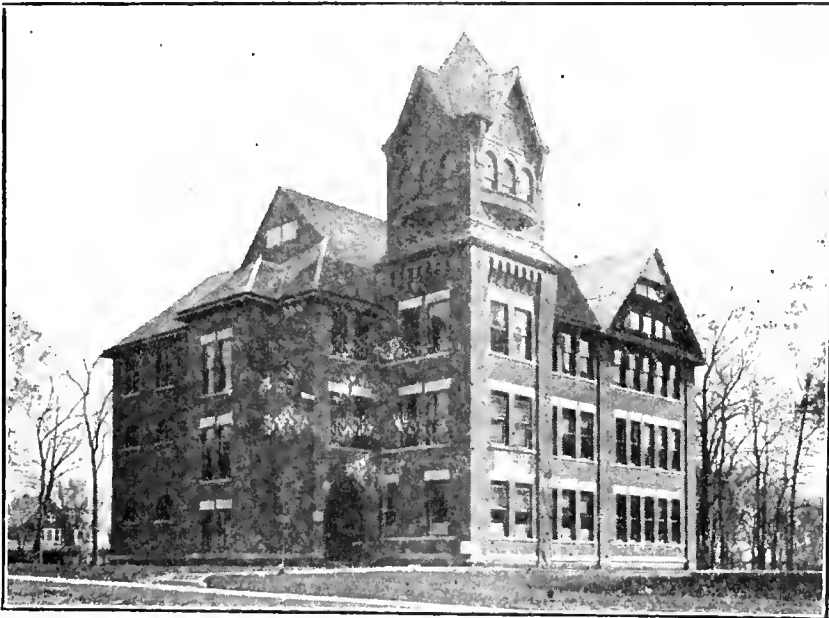
Walnut Grove became the center of an educational movement that has since its origin played an important part in the history of the intellectual development of Central Illinois. In 1847 Elder John T. Jones opened a school at the head of Conover avenue, but the work was cut short by an epidemic of measles.

In August, 1848, A. S. Fisher was employed to teach ten months. His salary was guaranteed by Elder Ben Major, E. B. Myers, Elijah Dickinson, Sr., and B. J. Radford, Sr. This school was located on a lot northeast of the cemetery in Walnut Grove. The course included some of the higher studies, and drew pupils from the entire neighborhood. The next year the building was enlarged, and Miss Sue Jones was employed to teach the primary work, while Prof. Fisher gave his attention to the higher branches. This was the beginning of Walnut Grove Seminary. In 1849 \$2,500 was raised for the erection of a building to be devoted to the work of the growing institution. It was located west of the old brick boarding hall and was a two-story brick structure. In December the school was incorporated as Walnut Grove Academy with John T. Jones, as president, and A. S. Fisher, as secretary. Elder Ben Major, who was so earnest in the support of the plans for the school, is honored as its founder. The first bequest was made by Jonathan Tressler, a native of Pennsylvania, who came to Walnut Grove in 1838.

In 1855 a charter was granted Eureka College and in September of that year it opened with William M. Brown, president; A. S. Fisher, professor of Mathematics; John H.

Neville, professor of language; O. A. Burgess, professor of science and philosophy; and Richard A. Conover, teacher in the preparatory school.

In 1857 and '58 the first college building was erected on the present campus, which was deeded to the college by Elias B. Myers and Elder James Conover. In 1860 E. W. Dickinson was the first graduate. He has been identified with the interest of the institution and the city since that time. In 1869 the chapel was erected, west of the original building. In 1884 Abingdon College, which had been conducted by the Christian church for a number of years, was united with Eureka College. A modern structure was erected in 1890, known as the Burgess Memorial hall, half of the funds necessary for the construction of the building being contributed by Mrs. O. A. Burgess.



**BURGESS MEMORIAL HALL.**

Prominent among the names of men who have taught in the institution stand those of Dr. J. M. Allen, John Lindsey, H. W. Everest, B. J. Radford, Carl John and R. E. Hieronymus. Among the most liberal friends have been, John Darst, who at one time mortgaged his farm to save the institution; Thomas Bondurant, of Deland, who gave a large

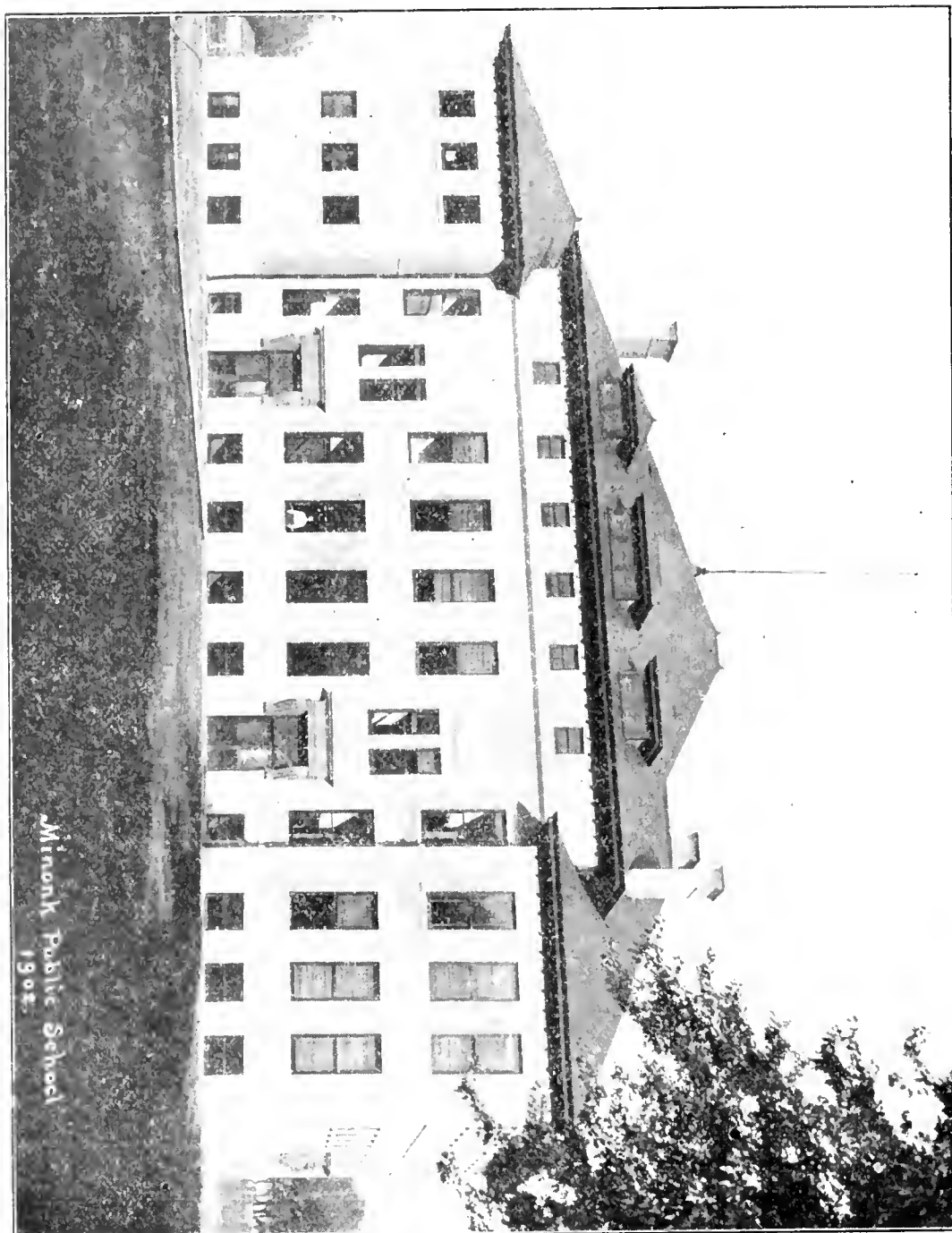
sum to aid in securing a fund of \$100,000 for the school; and Dr. N. B. Crawford, who gave \$25,000 in a single gift. He is at present president of the board of trustees, while R. E. Hieronymus has been president of the college, until recently, when his resignation was tendered.

The alumni of Eureka College number nearly 600 men and women, of whom seven have been called to be presidents of colleges, and normal schools. One has been a governor of a state, another of a territory, while still others have represented their districts in congress and in the state legislature. While numerous churches and schools have felt the uplifting influence of the institution thru ministers and teachers.

The Low Point Academy was an institution that promised good results in the field of education, but its usefulness was cut short by its destruction by fire in 1877. It was built by a company each of the members of which paid \$100. Prof. J. E. Lamb, who served two terms as county superintendent of schools, was elected as principal and the attendance was very encouraging. The fire occurred shortly after its erection and, as there was no insurance on the structure, it was never rebuilt.

The high school is the product of the public school system, and has developed in this county during the past twenty-five years. In spite of its recent introduction it has met with gratifying success. More than 50 young people graduate annually from the high schools of the county. Four of the schools are on the accredited list of the University of Illinois; Eureka, Minonk, East and West Side ElPaso. Today there are eleven graded schools in the county, employ fifty-seven teachers. The total enrollment of pupils in the graded and rural schools of the county in 1908 was 4343, while the value of school property was estimated at \$242,695. The expenditures for the support of the public school during that year were \$115,672.79.

Recently the County Superintendent, F. H. Doeden, has instituted the rural commencement, at which those who have successfully passed the seventh and eighth grade examina-



MINONK HIGH SCHOOL.

tions receive diplomas from the Superintendent. The commencement of 1909 was the third, yet in that brief time it has become very popular. The class this year numbered fifteen.

In 1908 there was opened the first consolidated school in the county at Congerville. The children are transported in wagons and the principal of the school, Prof. J. C. Whetzel, reports a successful operation of the plan. This year Roanoke and Metamora have each enlarged their districts by taking in new territory.

The school library has come to be one of the most helpful features of the public school in the county. The Mionk school has the best equipped library among the town schools, it having been enlarged by donations in memory of Donald Stoddard and Mrs. Louisa M. Parkes. It is estimated that there are now 9,000 volumes in the public school libraries of the county, with a value approaching \$6,000.

Hand in hand with the intellectual development of Woodford has gone its spiritual growth. The path broken by the pioneer in his search for new lands was quickly sought and followed by his spiritual adviser and friend.

The pioneer preacher was early on the ground to administer comfort to the discouraged and saddened and rebuke to the wayward. Long before the first church was erected services were held wherever circumstances would permit. Sometimes they were held in a school house, sometimes in a barn, or in some home thrown open to the people, and occasionally they were held in the grove. The preacher was a God fearing man, fearless in rebuking sinners and in warning them to flee from the wrath to come. Zadoek Hall Worth township. An old companion of Peter Cartwright, he came to this county in 1830 and settled in what was later had many of the characteristics of that fearless exponent of Methodism. His voice was raised thruout Central Illinois calling men to repentance and a new life. He was but one of the many who have been instruments in the hands of God

for the accomplishment of his work in the county. John Oatman, William Davenport, James Robeson, J. D. Newell, Barton W. Stone, Jeter Foster, and W. T. Adams raised their voices and preached the gospel among the pioneers. There was a high moral standard established among the settlers, and they were not satisfied until churches were formed. The first church to organize in the county was the Christian church at Eureka. It has maintained its organi-



**CHRISTIAN CHURCH, EUREKA.**

zation since 1832, and is now one of the strongest Protestant organizations in the county. The denomination has become strong and now has ten churches within the borders of Woodford, with an estimated membership of 1,650.

The Methodist circuit rider was early on the field evangelizing, and but a few years elapsed before the organizing of the first church. The earliest churches of this denomination were at Metamora and on the Ten Mile. From this beginning the number has multiplied until there are

now ten societies, having a membership of 846, and property valued at \$60,000.

From the earliest days there has been preaching by Presbyterian ministers, but the first church of that denomination was not established until 1853, when the Low Point church was founded. The year following a United Presbyterian church was opened. There are four congregations of the Presbyterian faith in the county with a membership of about 550. More than \$8,000 is annually expended by these organizations in the support of the gospel.

The first Baptist church was organized at the home of James Vance in 1837 by Rev. J. D. Newell. Soon afterward the Richland Baptist church was formed. These have passed out of existence, but there are now in the county, five organizations with 500 members, and churches valued at \$38,000. They expend about \$5,000 in support of the work of their denomination.

The first Lutheran church was in Worth township. It was a small log building but it served as a meeting place for a number of families. The organization long ago ceased to exist and has passed out of the memory of many of the older settlers. There are now two synods of the Lutheran church represented in the county. The Missouri synod has four organizations with a membership of 579, and with church property valued at about \$15,000. The Iowa synod has one society with a membership of 1,000. The Catholic church is the strongest in the county both in point of membership and wealth. The first church built was that of the Immaculate Conception at Lourds. This was organized in 1838, and in 1840 their church was erected. This is said to have been the first church built in the northern part of the state, altho there were others organized at an earlier date. There are now seven societies in the county, with church property exceeding \$100,000, in value. They minister to the needs of about 600 families.

The Dunkards, or Brethern, as they are now called,



organized their first church in the county in Roanoke township, under the leadership of J. R. and Geo. W. Gish, in 1852. In 1857 they erected their church. This organization has since that time been the center of the work of this society in the county.

The Amish church has developed considerable strength among the Germans during the last few years. In 1875 they erected a church northeast of Eureka, and have services there regularly. There was an Amish church organized in Worth township at an early date. There are two other organizations of this denomination in the county.

The Apostolic Christian Church has a strong membership in the country surrounding Eureka and Roanoke. Their church, southwest of the latter town, was built in 1873, and will seat 700 people. The congregation also has churches at Eureka and Roanoke.

The Congregationalists at one time had a church in El Paso, but it ceased to exist years ago. The Episcopalians organized a church at Metamora at an early date, but now have the only church of their denomination in the county at El Paso. The German Evangelicals at one time had a church in that city, but this has been abandoned and an English Evangelical was established. This was the forerunner of a number of prosperous little churches of that faith in the county.

Rev. D. M. Ficken has served his congregation as pastor longer than any other minister in the county. He was born in Germany in 1845 and came to America thirty-eight years ago, having first been highly educated in Erlangen, Goettingen and Leipzig Universities. After coming here he served churches at Fort Madison, Peoria, Waverly and other points. March 23, 1879, he came to his present charge, the Lutheran church in Linn township. He has resided there since that time. During that period he has baptized 1151 children, confirmed 495 young persons, married 224 couples, buried 310 persons and collected nearly \$6,000 for charity purposes.

The first Sunday School was established in the county in 1837 in what was known as the Morse settlement, the services being held at the home of Parker Morse, who lived near Cazenovia. The institution has grown and has been one of the most effective departments of the church. There are 38 schools in the county with a membership of 3,475 pupils. The Woodford County Sunday School Association has been an effective feature of the work. The association holds a county convention annually and also arranges for one in each township in the county. The officers are as follows: President, James Warner; vice-president, Amos Marshall; secretary, Mrs. W. H. Foster; treasurer, George Shuman, department superintendents: temperance, L. J. Freese, primary work, Mrs. W. F. Dudman; home work, Miss Alice Briggs; teachers' training, W. H. Foster; men's classes, J. F. Shephard; executive committee, O. M. Davison, L. J. Freese and W. H. Smith.

Woodford county has the distinction of having the first county Y. W. C. A. in the world. The National Board which is at the head of the great work, is located at New York City, and every country in the world has associations affiliated with it. For the past three years the splendid women at the head of this work have been trying to solve the problem of "How to reach the girls and women in the small towns and rural districts." Finally some one conceived the plan of organizing a county the same as if it were a city. This work was started in Woodford county in May, 1908, when Miss Helen F. Barnes, National Secretary from New York, and Miss Harriet A. Broad, state executive of Chicago, made a tour of the county to arouse enthusiasm for this work. The secretary came the first of October and the first county association was organized October 17th, 1908, and became a part of the National Association. There is a board of directors, with Mrs. M. A. Adams, of El Paso, as president, and each town or community is a branch with its own committee. Branches were organized in Eureka, El Paso, Minonk, Roa-

noke, Benson, Secor, Washburn. The membership is 250 and clubs and classes in Bible study, gymnasium, sewing, fancy work and drawing have interested the members. Socials, lectures, picnics, and various entertainments have been enjoyed. Sixteen Woodford county young women attended the summer conference at Lake Geneva.

The association is for the spiritual, social, physical and educational needs of women. The aim of the county organization is to give the girls of rural communities the advantages of the college and city.

The following are statistics:

Enrollment in clubs .....	90
Attendance .....	589
Enrollment in Bible classes .....	176
Attendance .....	1036
Enrollment in sewing classes .....	37
Attendance .....	148
Enrollment in gymnasium .....	30
Attendance .....	402
Attendance at socials .....	1560

The secretary, Miss Elizabeth McKenzie, has oversight of the work of the county.

## CHAPTER IX.

### The County Organizes.

**A**S the county became more thickly settled the demand for a more convenient county seat became imperative. By 1840 the vicinity of Spring Bay, Versailles, Bowling Green, Metamora and Walnut Grove had numerous settlers, and a movement was begun for the organization of a new county. Aside from the need of a more conveniently located seat of justice, was the ambition of the citizens of Versailles to make that the county seat. It was hoped that the location of the seat of justice there would soon make it the metropolis of the county. A petition was circulated praying for the creation of a new county, of which Versailles was to be the county seat. Thomas Bullock, who had named the town, was one of the prime movers in presenting the matter before the legislature. The granting of the petition was opposed by citizens of Washington, who were ambitious to make that city the county seat. A petition had been circulated with that in view, but Versailles had gotten its petition before the legislature in time to give it precedence, and Washington confined its efforts to opposing its granting. Mr. Bullock and others worked unceasingly and were rewarded by seeing their cherished bill become a law. A new county was created named Woodford, in honor of Woodford county, Kentucky, the former home of Mr. Bullock. It did not however, make Versailles the permanent seat of justice, but located it at that place for two years, on condition that suitable buildings were furnished free of expense to the county.

A school house was provided for the use of the county officials and answered the purpose of a court room very well. This law provided for the completion of the organization of the county, and the election of the necessary officers. On April 13th, 1841, the persons elected met in Versailles to organize. The affairs of the county were then in the hands of three county commissioners instead of a board of supervisors as at present. The commissioners organized with John J. Perry as clerk. On June 7th, they decided the date of the expiration of the term of each commissioner as follows:

Joseph Meek, of Walnut Grove, August, 1841; James Boys, of Metamora, August, 1842; Josiah Moore, of Bowling Green, August, 1843. The remaining county officers were as follows: Probate judge, J. B. Holland; sheriff, William S. Magarity; circuit clerk, S. J. Cross; county clerk, John J. Perry; coroner, William Hoshor; treasurer, James S. McCord; assessor, Joshua Woosley; collector, William Rockwell; surveyor, S. S. Parke.

For convenience in voting the county was laid off into four election precincts, designated as Bowling Green, Versailles, Partridge and Richland. The voting place in Partridge was fixed at the house of John Sunderland, while that of Richland precinct was the house of James Owens.

It may be interesting to note here the names of the first judges of election after the organization of the county. Bowling Green, Eli Patrick, Samuel Arnold, Samuel Kirkpatrick; Versailles, Henry I. Clark, Warren C. Watkins, Ben Major; Partridge, Jefferson Hoshor, John Page, Joel Ranney; Richland, Benj. D. Perry, Jesse Hammers, Jefferson Sowards. In a short time Spring Bay precinct was formed. In each of these precincts was an overseer of the poor, whose duty was to look after the needy in his precinct. The first of these appointed by the commissioners were, Versailles, Benj. J. Radford; Bowling Green, Reuben Carlock; Partridge, John Page; Richland, J. Foster.

The first county order was issued to Henry L. Clark for \$1.00 in payment for his services as judge of election, that being the compensation of such an official at that time, while the clerk received \$1.25.

The growth of the financial affairs of the county may be shown by a glance at the report of the first collector, who acted for the county instead of for each township as at present. His total collections were \$1,034.60, while the collections of the various township collectors in 1909 amounted to \$262,322.32. William Rockwell, the first county collector, gave a bond for \$4,000, while that of L. C. Gish, now county treasurer, was \$202,000.00. The first sheriff, William S. Magarity, gave bond for \$1,000.00 which amount seems small in contrast with the bond for \$10,000.00 required of the present sheriff, B. F. Slenker.

Each official subscribed to an oath in which he pledged himself to support the constitutions of the United States and of the State of Illinois, and to fulfill the duties of his office to the best of his ability, but in addition to that he was required to swear that he had never taken part in a duel, had sent no challenge, and further that he would take no part whatever in a duel during his term of office.

Woodford county was made a part of the Eighth judicial district, and the first session of court was held at Versailles, in September, 1841, with Judge Samuel H. Treat on the bench. The county commissioners, at their session in June, had chosen twenty-three men to act as the first grand jury, and also twenty-four men as petit jurors. The grand jurors were as follows: Thomas A. McCord, John Mohr, S. Y. Barnard, Reuben Carlock, William C. Anthony, Henry L. Clark, Amos Watkins, James Findley, David Travis, Elijah Dickinson, Caleb Davidson, Ellis Parker, Parker Morse, William Dodds, Jesse Hammers, James Owens, Samuel Headlock, Harlow T. Barney, Austin Crocker, Joseph Wilkerson, John Sunderland, John Page and George Bennett. Only seventeen of the above number are shown by the court

records to have been present the session of court. Those present with John C. Coons formed the first actual grand jury. John W. Page was chosen foreman and the work of the term was taken up. Two indictments were returned, one against Nathaniel Wilson for larceny, and the other against Alfred Moore for arson. Neither case was tried at that term of court.

Daniel R. Meek, who resides at Secor, was present at the opening of the session of court. He distinctly remembers the occasion, which was an important one in the history of Versailles. Flags were flying from the school house in which court was held and men laid aside their work to attend court. There were a number of prominent men in attendance upon the session of the court altho they had not gained the prominence they afterward attained. Among these were Abraham Lincoln, David Davis and others.

The law that created Woodford county provided that all cases begun in the courts of Tazewell or McLean counties prior to the organization of the new county, by citizens living within the boundaries of Woodford, should be decided in the courts where they were begun.

The first entry on the docket is that in the case of George Case, appellee, vs. Isaac W. Lowe, appellant, in which the suit was dismissed as per agreement.

David R. Campbell was present as states attorney. There were no jury cases at that term altho twenty-four jurymen had been drawn. These were as follows: Wesley Arnold, Jacob Stevenson, William Long, James A. Whorton, Thomas H. Baker, John P. Beaty, Thomas Bullock, Benj. J. Radford, M. R. Bullock, David Deweese, James Wells, James Brown, Cooley Curtis, Francis Boggs, Andrew Galbreth, Solomon Tucker, Aaron Richardson, Samuel Arnold, William S. Pratt, Norman Dutton, George Kingston, C. D. Banta, Amos A. Brown and William Willis.

In 1843 a law was passed submitting to a vote of the people of Tazewell and Woodford counties a proposition to

change the boundary lines between the two counties to the line between townships 24 and 25 north of the base line, but the proposition was never adopted. The same year the boundary line between Woodford and McLean counties was definitely fixed and has remained unchanged since that time.

In 1849 a movement was organized for the division of the county into townships. The proposition brought forth strong opposition, and a number of prominent men were untiring in their efforts to defeat the measure. The first election was held in 1850, the vote standing at that time 153 for township organization and 107 against it. The proposition did not have the required majority of all the votes of the county, and was resubmitted in 1852, the vote then standing 469 for and 298 against organization. In 1853 a third test was made, the vote then standing 310 for, to 109 against. It was not until 1854 that the proposition carried the required majority, the vote standing 692 for, to 193 against the plan of division. The same year the court appointed John Summers, Daniel B. Owen, and Edgar Babcock commissioners to divide the county into townships. The commissioners did their work and on April 16th, 1855, the first board of supervisors in Woodford county held its meeting at Metamora. The board was made up as follows: Metamora, Simon P. Shope; Montgomery, James Vance; Olio, Joseph Meek; Panola, and Minonk, Robert N. McClelland; Greene, John R. Gaston; Roanoke, David S. Brown; Linn and Clayton, Isaac Fisher; Cazenovia, John W. Acres; Worth, Jacob Shuck; Spring Bay, George N. Schnibly; Palestine, Allen Hart; Partridge, Jefferson Hoshier. The board organized by choosing as its chairman, Simon P. Shope, of Metamora.

With the organization of this board the work of the county commissioners ended. For about fourteen years the county had been under their control and the affairs had been wisely and economically administered. The growth of the various settlements seemed to demand a closer supervision and the new system was instituted. The first eight years of



the county's existence, the commissioners were elected, one being chosen each year to serve three years. In 1849, however, the law was changed and the affairs were administered by a county judge and two associates. The first judge was Welcome P. Brown and his associates were William C. Poynter and W. E. Buckingham.

The growth of the county was gradual but steady, and the business of the new board increased quite rapidly. In the beginning Clayton and Linn, Minonk and Panola were united so as to form but two precincts. This was due to the sparse settlement at that time, but it was but a few years until each township had its full quota of officials. Cruger township was not created until 1870, when it was cut off the west side of Olio. Kansas township was separated from Palestine in 1859.

The county is controlled at the present time by the following board of supervisors:

Minonk, N. L. Davison; Clayton, B. W. Uphoff, Linn, Ludwig Tjaden; Cazenovia, J. H. Lesch; Partridge, Sol Winkler; Spring Bay, Alfred Hoshier; Worth, Leo T. Schwenk; Metamora, Henry Heininger; Roanoke, C. F. Yeek; Greene, Frank Vogel; Panola, Theobald Stimpert; El Paso, E. A. Childs; Palestine, W. A. Colburn; Olio, E. B. Dickinson; Cruger, Ed. Perrine; Kansas, W. H. Dixon; Montgomery, Simon Naffzinger. The board is organized with Alfred Hoshier of Spring Bay as chairman.

The early officers were usually elected for but two years, the coroner, sheriff, school commissioner, surveyor and treasurer each serving for that length of time. Later these officers were elected for the full four year term. The title of school commissioner was changed in 1865 to county superintendent of schools. The county has been very fortunate in the selection of its officers. Only once has it suffered serious defalcation. Ayrs M. Whittaker, county treasurer, was declared a defaulter September 11th, 1878, in the sum of \$41,632. 63. The bondsmen were called upon to make up

the shortage. A settlement was finally made with the county bondsmen on the basis of 65 cents on the dollar. They were only held responsible for the defalcation of the county fund. The state bondsmen were held for the other funds. These protested and after three hearings in court they were released from further responsibility on the payment of a nominal sum, amounting to about \$800.

The county is now controlled by an efficient corps of officials composed as follows: County judge, John F. Bosworth; county clerk, Adolph Woltzen; circuit clerk, L. H. VanAlstine; superintendent of schools, F. H. Doeden; treasurer, L. C. Gish; states attorney, Orman Ridgley; surveyor, D. H. Davison; coroner, W. S. Morrison, master-in-chancery, John R. Tweddale; sheriff, B. F. Slenker.

Of these D. H. Davison has been the longest server, having been surveyor at various periods for thirty years. L. H. VanAlstine and Adolph Woltzen have been connected with the official business of the county for a number of years, the former as deputy circuit clerk, and the latter as clerk; the latter first as deputy treasurer and later as county clerk.

The business of the county has grown to such magnitude that the treasurer, superintendent of schools, sheriff and circuit clerk are each empowered to employ a deputy, while the county clerk employs two. In the more busy seasons the county and circuit clerks frequently employ additional assistance. As the county grows in wealth the business of the probate court, and consequently of the county clerk, greatly increases.

## CHAPTER X.

### The County Seat.

THE question of the location of the county seat of Woodford county has been a live issue ever since its organization. Even before the law creating the county had passed, the hopes of obtaining the county seat at Versailles played no insignificant part in the movement for its organization. The jog in the county line between Tazewell and Woodford cut Washington, which would have been a formidable rival for county seat honors, out of Woodford and made it a part of Tazewell. The unsuccessful effort to change Woodford's boundary line in 1843 was but another effort to bring Washington within the borders of this county, and had at its foundation a plan for the removal of the county seat to that city. The question was only permanently settled by the erection of buildings of such value and permanence as to make removal an unwise action.

The act creating the county located the seat of justice at Versailles for a period of two years. At the end of that time an election was to be held and the people were to decide for themselves as to the location of the seat of justice. Some restrictions were made in the law as to the contestants. Each town competing for the honor was required to give bond in the sum of \$1,500, for the faithful payment of all pledges made toward the expense of new buildings. In case no town received a majority of the votes, a second election was to be held and only the two points receiving the highest number

of votes could be voted upon. In spite of these elaborate provisions made in the law for this election it was destined never to be held. In 1843, before the expiration of the two years, during which Versailles was permitted to enjoy county seat privileges, a new law was passed giving the authority to locate the seat of justice into the hands of a commission. The law was drawn up in the interest of Versailles; as the people of that village feared to submit the matter to a vote. The law was opposed by parties from other parts of the county, but the opposition only served to increase the commission from three members to five. The following were appointed to decide the question: John H. Bryant, of Bureau county; John H. Harris, of Tazewell county; James K. Scott, of Dewitt county; L. A. Hamaford, of Peoria county; J. L. Sharp, of Fulton.

There was a sharp competition between the aspirants. On June 17th, 1843, the commissioners met at Versailles and after giving due consideration to the claims of contesting towns, decided to locate the seat of justice at Hanover, since called Metamora. The entry of their decision as it stands on the records of the county commissioners, is as follows:

We, the undersigned commissioners, appointed by an act of the Legislature of Illinois, to locate the permanent seat of justice of Woodford county, approved Feb. 28, 1843, and an act supplementary to said act, approved March 6, 1843, having met at the town of Versailles and been duly sworn, according to the provisions of said acts, have proceeded to examine said county and the different sites proposed for the seat of justice, with respect to present and future population of said county, and after mature deliberation have agreed to locate the said seat of justice in the town of Hanover on sections 17 and 20, township 27 north of the base line in range two west of the third principal meridian,

and that public buildings be located on such block or lots as the county shall think best.

Done at Versailles the 17th day of June, 1843.

J. L. SHARP.

L. H. HANAFORD.

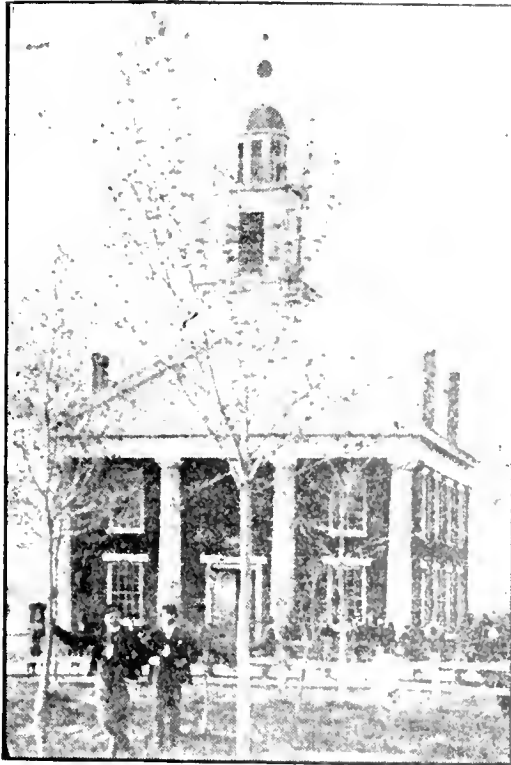
JOHN H. BRYANT.

Acting in accordance with the above orders, the county commissioners instructed the clerk of the commissioners' court to move all books, papers and furniture belonging to the county to Hanover on the Fourth day of July, 1843, or as soon thereafter as convenient. On August 12th, a special session of the commissioners was held when an order was issued, directing the circuit clerk to move all books, papers and furniture from Versailles to Hanover on September 1st.

The removal of the county seat was a sore disappointment to the hopes of the people of Versailles, and the town never recovered from the effects of the change. The building, which had been used as a court house, was located at the northwest corner of the public square. When the removal occurred, this building was sold to Isaac Boyd, being first used as a house and afterwards as an outbuilding.

It was two years before the new court house was erected at Hanover, and in the meantime temporary arrangements were made for the accommodation of the county officers. The contract was entered into with William Rockwell and Samuel S. Parke, who were extensive land holders in that vicinity, June 4, 1844. The structure was to be brick, modeled after the court house at Lacon. It was to be 40 feet by 50 feet, two stories in height, and was to be furnished by January 1st, 1846. In return the county agreed to convey all the private donations, consisting of town lots, lands, notes and other evidences of indebtedness given originally for the express purpose of erecting a court house in the town of Hanover, to this firm. In addition to the conveyance of these donations, the county agreed to pay the firm

the surplus revenues for the years, 1844 and '45, at the same time the county bound itself to levy at the same rate as before and to use due economy, making no unusual expenditures. In case of any disagreement between the contracting parties, it was to be submitted to arbitration.



**COURT HOUSE IN 1860.**

The contract was sublet and the work was done by David Irving, the contract price being \$4,400. This structure served the purpose of the county for half a century. It has been made historic thru the great men who have argued in its court rooms. Its halls have been made to resound with the eloquence of Lincoln, Douglas, Ingersoll, Stevenson and a number of other attorneys who have been closely identified with the political life of the state and nation.

In 1851 a contract was entered into with Luther C. Kinney for the erection of a jail on lots 10, 11 and 12, block 40, Metamora. The building was brick and was to be finished by March 1st, 1852. The contract price was \$2,498.

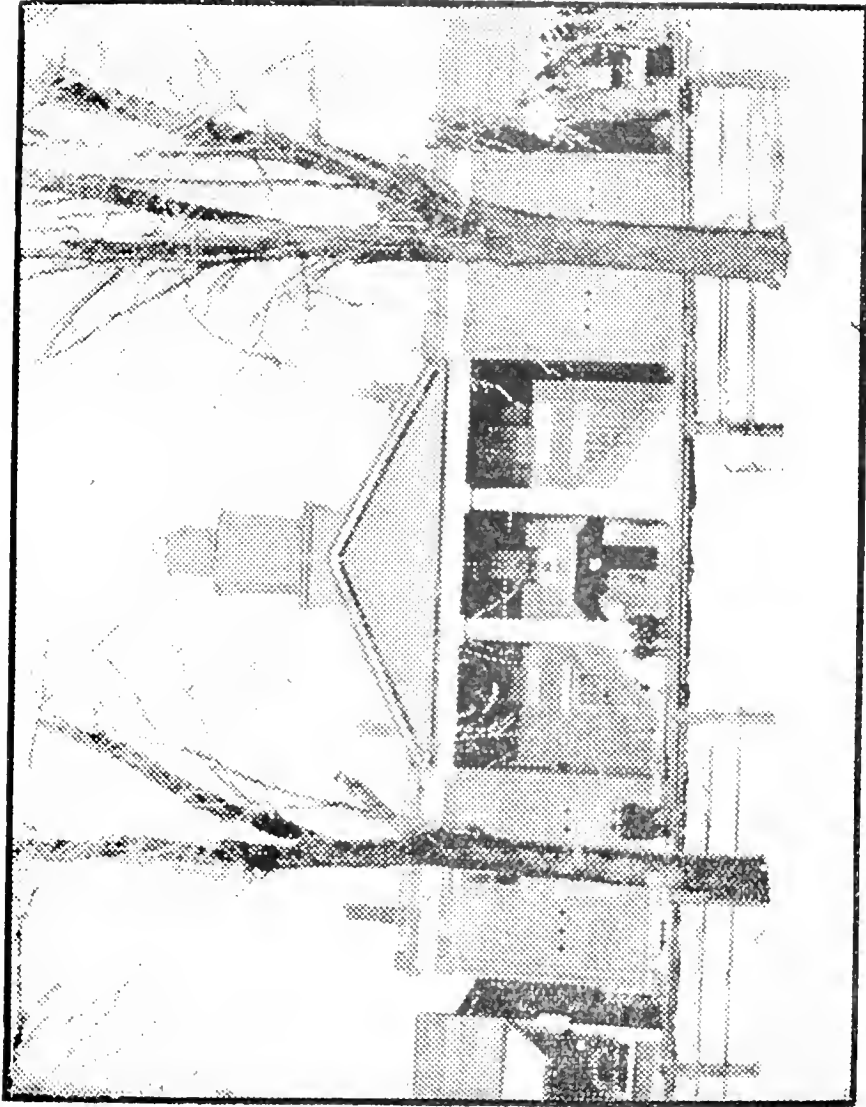
As the county grew, demands for space in the court house increased, and it became necessary to make extensive additions to it. The building finally assumed its present form.

Metamora was not, however, to retain undisputed possession of the county seat. It was for many years the bone of contention between competing towns. There were several

contestants for this honor. ElPaso once appeared as a claimant for it, but Eureka and Roanoke took the field most prominently in the contest. The former based its claims on its greater accessibility, the latter on its being nearer the center of the county. It was necessary that an aspirant have a petition signed by a majority of the voters of the county, before the matter could be submitted to a vote of the people. These petitions were the cause of much friction between the contestants. Various charges were brought to the effect that graveyards had been visited for names, signers had repeated, and that others were not legal citizens of the county. The petitions had to be able to stand a searching investigation and still have a clear majority of the voters of the county, after all illegal names had been expurgated, before the matter of removal could be submitted to a vote. It was then necessary that a majority of all the votes of the county be cast for removal. Again and again the matter was submitted, and on at least two occasions the majority of the vote cast was for removal, but the attorneys for Metamora were always able to show to the satisfaction of the court that the vote fell short of an actual majority of the total voting strength of the county.

In 1867 ElPaso sent Robert G. Ingersoll, as their attorney to appear before the board of supervisors at Metamora, and make an offer of \$30,000 for the removal of the county seat to that place. The matter was submitted to the vote of the people, and the canvass indicated that 1,901 votes had been cast for the removal and 1861 against removal. A committee, composed of D. P. Kenyon, chairman; Andrew Cress, R. L. Sidwell, John Darst and Abraham Fulton, was appointed by the chairman of the board of supervisors to investigate the matter of the removal. The committee reported that there had been 3,812 votes cast. Of this number, 1,901 votes were for removal to ElPaso, leaving a balance of 1,911 against removal. They advised that the matter be submitted to the court, and as a result the seat of justice remained at Metamora.

May 3rd, 1869, Eureka and Metamora contested for the honor, but Eureka failed to develop its expected strength, the vote standing as follows: For removal to Eureka, 904, against removal to Eureka, 2,255. Eureka and ElPaso, at



COURT HOUSE IN METAMORA 1894.

the time their first contests were held, each had railroads, while Metamora had none. This argument was used extensively but failed to bring the people to see that a change was needed..

In 1873 a sharp contest took place between Roanoke and Metamora. The petition was circulated asking for a submis-



sion of the matter to a vote and the necessary number of signatures was obtained. The vote was taken November 11, 1873, and resulted in 1,665 votes being cast for removal and 1,628 against it. It will be seen that Roanoke had a clear majority of 37 votes. Metamora at once contested. It devolved upon attorneys for that place to prove that the number of votes cast for removal was not a majority of the votes of the county. After the submission of the evidence, the court decided that Roanoke had failed to get the required number and the court house remained at Metamora. Under the law as it exists the matter may not be submitted oftener than once in ten years. At the end of that period of time Roanoke again appeared as a contestant, the election occurring in 1884. This time a light vote was polled and the majority stood heavily against removal, the vote being 1,122 for removal and 2,441 against removal.

In 1894 the final contest took place and resulted in the removal of the county seat to Eureka. It was hard fought from beginning to end, each side exerting all its energies. It was quite generally recognized that this was the final contest. A new court house and jail were needed, and wherever these were erected the county seat would remain permanently located. Committees were appointed on each side and thousands of dollars were expended in the campaign. Every township was thoroly canvassed and arguments both for and against removal were known in every part of the county.

The problem with Eureka was to reach the indifferent voter who had no interest in the location of the county seat. Every stay at home vote was favorable to Metamora. Minonk was the scene of the hardest fought battles and members of the committee spent the day there looking after the fight. As an inducement to locate the seat of justice at Eureka, the city council of that city deeded the public square, which is in the center of the business part of the city, to the county, the conditions being that the court house be located on it. The election resulted in 2,595 votes being cast

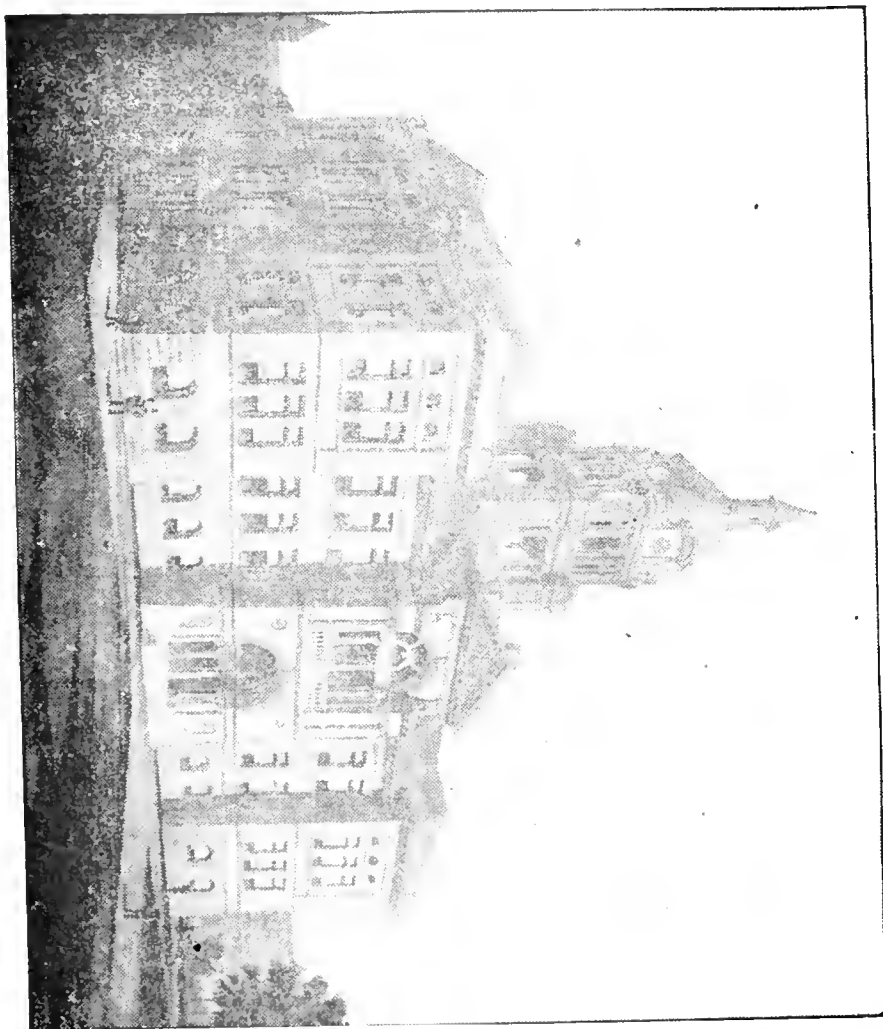
for removal and 1,960 votes were cast against it. The claim was at once set up by the friends of Metamora that the votes cast for removal did not represent a majority of votes of the county. A contest was at once begun by Metamora to test the matter. The attorneys of that city, not wishing to make Woodford county a party of the suit made the city of Eureka defendant. On hearing the argument that Woodford county and not Eureka should have been made defendant, Judge Worthington sustained Eureka in its plea, and the case was thrown from court. As the thirty days, within which a contest could be begun, had passed, Metamora had no recourse save an appeal to the supreme court. The decision of Judge Worthington was sustained and on receipt of news of the decision the records were at once removed to Eureka.

There had been no arrangements made for the accommodation of the county officers at the new county seat, and they were scattered in various empty buildings until a new court house could be erected. The county clerk's office was on the east side of College street in the building now occupied by the Woodford County Republican. The sheriff and circuit clerk offices were in the R. D. Smith building on the northwest corner of College and First streets. The jail and court room were in the building owned by Mrs. R. E. DeMotte on the corner of Second and Callender streets.

As soon as possible arrangements were made for the erection of a new court house. In order that the arrangements for the convenience of the county officers might be as complete as possible, the board of supervisors took a trip thru the state, visiting a number of the more modern court houses, and investigating as to material, cost, etc. It was determined that Woodford county should have a court house that would be a credit to the county, and, at the same time, one that was not unduly expensive. Plans were submitted by a number of architects, and after careful consideration the plans presented by Bell and Kent, of Council Bluffs, Iowa, were accepted. They called for a commodious struc-

ture two-story and a basement in height, constructed of gray sandstone and surmounted by a handsome dome. On the second floor are the circuit court room, jury rooms, and several offices, while on the first floor there is a conveniently arranged county court room, and also offices of the sheriff, county and circuit clerks. The basement has a meeting room for the

COURT HOUSE AT EUREKA, ILLINOIS.



supervisors, a G. A. R. room, and offices of the treasurer and superintendent of schools.

The building was constructed in a very substantial manner, and under the careful supervision of the board that was made up as follows in 1897: Chairman, N. S. de Vries, Joseph Hindert, B. W. Uphoff, John J. Tjaden, Frank Mau, Jacob

Wagner, W. H. Friedrich, Anthony Fisher, Peter Schertz, A. J. Woltzen, James M. Jeter, E. A. Childs, Thomas Cribben, P. A. Felter, Jacob Miller, J. B. Detweiler, E. S. Brown,

Those who took part in planning for the building in 1896, but were not on the board that followed, were Josiah Kerrick, Adam Stephens, George Andrews, J. P. Kunkler.

Bids were received from numerous firms, that of H. G. Bruning, of Havana, Ill., being finally accepted, the contract price being \$60,762. The special duty of overseeing the

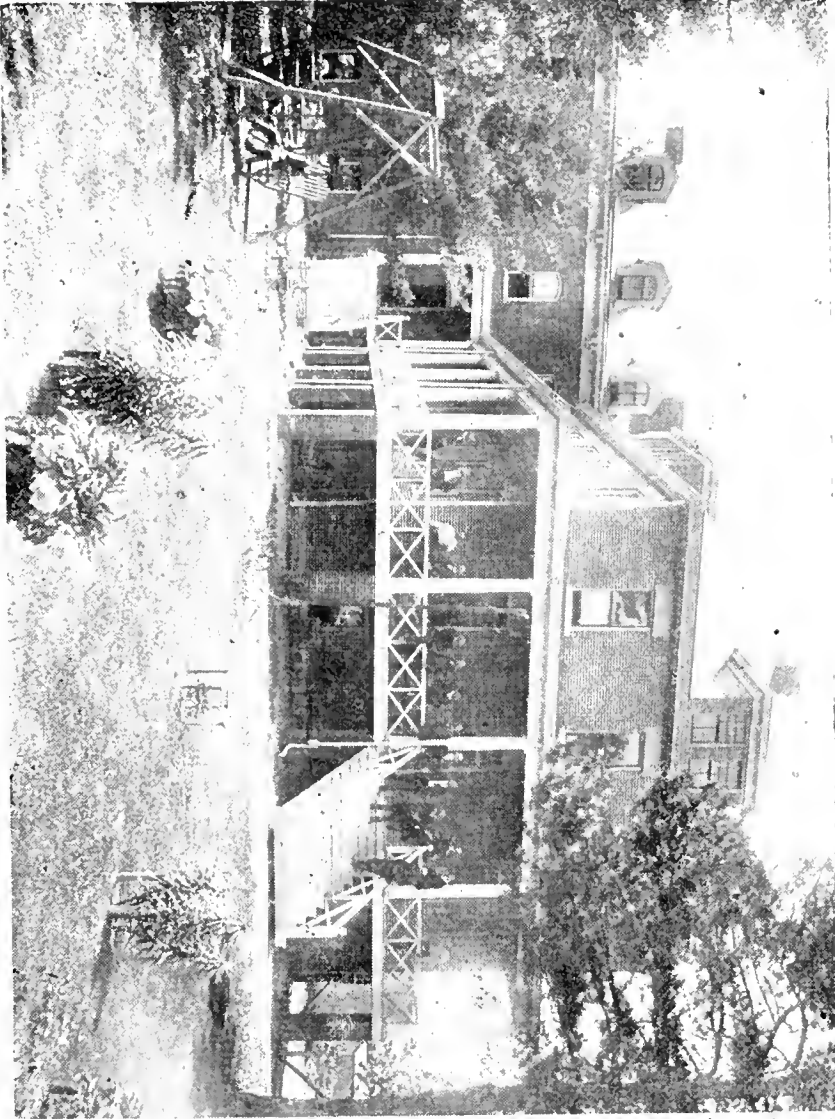


**SHERIFF'S RESIDENCE AND THE JAIL, EUREKA.**

work devolved upon the building committee which was composed of P. A. Felter, chairman, W. H. Fredrich, Thomas Cribben, B. W. Uphoff, A. J. Woltzen, Ed. C. Engel, county clerk. The county employed Henry Lesch, of Washburn, to look after interests of the county and superintend the work of building. The funds necessary for the work were raised by the issue of interest bearing warrants, which were redeemed in a very short time by the levy of one per cent tax. The corner stone of the new structure was laid under the supervision of the board of supervisors with appropriate ceremonies, the stone being laid by Miss Gertie de Vries, the daughter of the chairman of the board.

A few months after the completion of the court house, a commodious jail and jailer's residence were erected. This structure was built on the property on First street across from the new court house. The jail is of pressed brick with

THE HOME AT COUNTY POOR FARM.



stone trimmings, the residence portion being in the front and the jail in the rear. The contract for the work was let to Kipp and Perryman, of Mimonk, for \$18,000. The cells are modern and are strong and well constructed.

On the same lot with the jail the heating plant, for both court house and jail was erected, both buildings being heated by steam. There is no fire in the vicinity of the court

house, and the building is considered fire proof. The records are kept in a manner to preclude all apparent chance of destruction. All these buildings are lighted thruout by electricity and the office equipment is ample for all needs of county officials. The yards of both court house and jail have been graded and are now beautiful lawns. It is estimated that the value of the county property at Eureka will reach \$125,000.

In connection with the description of the other public buildings it is appropriate to refer to the commodious alms house, located between Metamora and Eureka. It is located on a farm purchased in 1867, and the property has been improved from time to time until it is now one of the best equipped alms houses in Central Illinois. It is under the management of a superintendent appointed by the board of supervisors. The present superintendent, Frank Murray, has held that position for several years to the entire satisfaction of the board. The farm consists of 240 acres, and is made practically self-supporting. It has been the policy of the county to keep its property in the best condition, but while this is true and the county officials are supplied with all needed equipments, the low rate of county taxation bears witness to the economy of the officials. The original building cost \$10,800 and in 1903 an addition costing \$10,540 was made to the building, and \$5,673 was expended in installing a heating plant.

## CHAPTER XI.

### Travel and Communication.

**T**HE early means of communication and travel were very unsatisfactory. Whenever possible the rivers were taken advantage of for transportation and a great number of emigrants bound for the west made the journey as far as possible on the Ohio and other rivers. Travelers from the northeast came on the Great Lakes to Fort Dearborn, afterward Chicago, and completed the journey overland. The emigrant vessels presented a grotesque appearance, being loaded with chattels of the mover and his family. Others came in covered emigrant wagons, called prairie schooners. The occupants of these suffered many hardships in crossing the country. The narrow trails were difficult to follow and the tall slough and prairie grass which grew to great height presented a serious barrier to the traveler's progress. The journey was often made thru swamps and across rivers and streams that were without bridges.

It was many years before roads were laid out. Perhaps the first of these thru Woodford county passed thru Hanover and was followed by the stage coach that passed that way. It is said this was originally laid out by dragging a log across the prairie grass. The progress in the direction of laying out roads was very slow. The state took the matter up and the county was soon crossed by several so-called state roads. These were winding and sought the easiest places for fording streams and the parts of the prairie least apt to become impassible. Among the first of-

ficial acts of the commissioners of the newly created county was a provision for roads. In accordance with a legislative enactment of the session of 1840-'41 a state road was laid out thru Woodford, extending from Oliver's Grove, Livingston county, to Peoria. It passed thru Bowling Green Versailles and Washington, being seventy-four miles in length, nineteen of which were in this county. A second state road was from Bloomington to Spring Bay, while still others included one from Peoria to Ottawa and one along the northern border of the county. These roads were not kept in very good condition, and it was many years before bridges were built. One of the oldest of these was across Walnut creek, near Mount Zion, and was known as Travis bridge.

The earliest provision made by the commissioners for the betterment of roads was in 1841, when the county was divided into fifteen districts, in each of which there was a supervisor of roads. This number was increased as the needs of the county demanded. The first of these were as follows: Meredith Myers, Allen Patrick, James Richardson, Allen Hart, James Phillips, Wm. P. Atteberry James Mitchell, Peter Engel, Joseph Nelson, Thornton Parker, Jefferson Hoshor, John Foster, Jefferson Sowards, and Benjamin Major. The roads of the county were superintended by such supervisors until the division into townships in 1855, when each township chose its own commissioners.

The first public means of conveyance aside from boats on the rivers and lakes, was the stage coach. These were large, brilliantly painted vehicles, a little on the style of the bus of today. They were usually drawn by four horses and made what was considered at that period very good time. One of these lines ran thru Versailles and Bowling Green to Peoria, being ferried across the Illinois. Another line passed thru Hanover. Fred Hartman, for many years the bell ringer at Eureka College, was an old stage coach



driver on the line thru Mackinaw. While living he was able to tell many interesting altho trying experiences passed thru by the early coach driver. It was sometimes necessary to pry the wheels out of the mud with a rail, and the passengers were called on to assist in the operation, before the coach could proceed on its journey. These coaches carried the mails, but these were small, consisting of a few papers and an occasional letter.

The pioneer did not need the stage greatly, as he usually walked or rode horseback. Many a settler made his tour of investigation on foot or horseback, going back to bring his family to his new found home. William Fisher, who came here from Vermont, walked back to that state for his wife. Elijah Marshall tells of walking from Detroit to Ottawa. They covered about fifty miles a day. They would get supper and sleep at one place and would rise at daylight and walk until breakfast time, when they would get breakfast at another place. Rowland Davison, who later settled in Linn township, walked a great part of the journey from Troy, New York, to Groveland and return. Joseph Meek made his first trip to Woodford county on horseback.

The pioneer was accustomed to meeting and overcoming difficulties, and met and accomplished the long journey as he did all other tasks in his way.

It was not until 1854 that a railroad was built thru the county, but navigation on the Illinois was open and Spring Bay was quite a good point for many years. A carrier was employed to take the mail from Kappa to Spring Bay twice a week, George Taggart being employed in that position. He visited Metamora and Eureka on the route.

The building of the Illinois Central opened a new epoch in the history of the county. It passed thru the eastern part which was practically unsettled at the time of the construction of the road. This company received substantial aid from the government, being granted each alternate section of land for six miles on each side of the track. This

gave the company thousands of acres of land in the best region of the county. In return for this grant of land the company agreed to pay into the state treasury seven per cent of its gross income annually. The income to the state from this source from 1855 to the present time exceeds twenty-seven million dollars.

At the time of the building of this road it was possible to ride for miles without seeing a single dwelling house, but, immediately upon the construction of it, the region began to be settled and is now one of the most populous parts of the county. Soon the entire aspect of the country was changed. Farm houses began to dot the prairies and several towns soon sprang up along the line of road. Panola was one of the first of these. At that time the engines used wood as fuel, and had a wooding station near Panola. South of there a turntable was located in the early history of the road.

Four years later, in 1856, a second railway was built thru the county, known as the eastern branch of the Peoria and Oquakwa, later called the Toledo, Peoria and Warsaw, and now known as the Toledo, Peoria and Western. This road crossed the Central at right angles. As in the case of the building of the first line, it resulted in the establishment of several towns that have since become of considerable importance. It extended a mile north of the old town of Eureka, and had the result of locating the city a mile north of the original site. This road has since become an important line of travel between Peoria and eastern cities, and also has extensive Chicago traffic.

The same year that witnessed the construction of this road, saw the surveying of the Tonica and Petersburg line thru Metamora, but it was not constructed. In 1870 the St. Louis, Jacksonville and Chicago was built thru to Metamora and later was finished to Washington by the Chicago and Alton company, which had come into possession of the road. Metamora township bonded itself for \$50,000, to aid in the construction of the road, and Cazenovia township also took

stock in the company to the amount of \$50,000. The original plan was to complete the road further south, but the work was not done. In recent years the trains on this road have run into Peoria over the Toledo, Peoria and Western.

On the completion of this line the Low Point postoffice and store, that were located a short distance from the present site of the town, were moved to the town as it is now located.

In 1872 the Chicago, Pekin and Southwestern road was constructed. The various townships along the road subscribed liberally toward building the line. Minonk township subscribed \$50,000. Clayton also pledged a like amount, but it was never paid owing to a technicality that allowed the township to escape payment. Ohio township voted \$50,000, after a bitter contest. The road was never completed thru the township, altho the grading was finished. The completion of the road required the building of two expensive bridges. This, coupled with suits for damages incurred from grading, probably resulted in the abandonment of the plan, the T. P. & W. tracks being used instead. Roanoke township did not vote bonds, but donated \$5,000 in private subscriptions on condition that a switch be put in near the present site of Roanoke. The road is now under the control of the Santa Fe. For several months during 1892 this branch was a link in a line from St. Louis to Chicago, operating what was known as the Red Express. During the continuance of this arrangement Eureka was the end of the division, a round house and turntable being located at the junction of the T. P. & W. and Santa Fe east of there. A number of men were brought to Eureka by this plan. The trains were discontinued because of the protest of the Passenger Association which charged the St. Louis end of the line with cutting rates.

In 1873 a line of road was constructed that was known as the middle division of the Illinois Central. It extends from Minonk to Kankakee, connecting with the Bloomington and Kankakee branch at Kempton. It enters Woodford

a short distance south of Minonk and runs into that city over the main line of the Central. Minonk is made the terminal and has profited much from its construction.

The last road to be constructed thru the county was the Lake, Erie and Western thru Montgomery township. This was constructed in 1888 and has resulted in the establishment of Goodfield and Congerville. It has been a great convenience to the southern portion of the county and has given them a closer market for their grain and stock.

With the multiplication of railways there come an increase in ease of communication. The mail service has been developed to a degree of perfection that was hitherto unthought of. One of the greatest advance steps taken in this department has been developed during the past eight years in rural mail delivery. The offices of the county each have from one to three carriers, who reach practically all the farm houses in the county. Their routes vary from 20 to 27 miles, and their lines are laid out so as to give service to the greatest number.

The telegraph has developed side by side with the railroads, but it is only within the past quarter of a century that it has become the popular means of newspaper service. News was often a week old before it was published in the dailies. As late as 1858 an account of the Douglas rally at Metamora on September 30th, appeared in the Chicago Daily Times, of October sixth. The county is now crossed by numerous wires of both the Western Union and Postal Telegraph Companies.

It is difficult to ascertain the date of the introduction of the first telephone in the county. Dr. N. B. Crawford had one in operation between his house and office at least twenty-five years ago. This was among the first used. Now the county is served by numerous telephone exchanges, that have telephones in hundreds of homes in the county.

The latest means of travel is the automobile, which has become very popular during the past five or six years. There are now several hundred in the county. The Meta-

mora Herald speaks of a vehicle, built by Geo. Marsh and a painter named Smith, as the forerunner of the automobile. This was constructed in 1858 and was considered a marvel at that time, but it finally went into the scrap pile. The memory of it is only recalled by the recent introduction of the automobile and its adoption as a popular means of travel.

## CHAPTER XII.

### War Records.

**I**N the great civil strife that threatened to destroy the nation, Woodford county maintained her loyalty to the union. When hostilities broke out party prejudices were laid aside and with but few exceptions the citizens were loyal to the national government, while President Lincoln received their support in his effort to put down the rebellion. The approach of the war cloud had been watched with growing interest. Slavery had many opponents thruout the country, as was shown by the existence of the branch of the underground railroad thru the county.

When the president's call for troops was issued, Woodford responded with alacrity. Governor Richard Yates, famous as the war governor of Illinois, found a ready response to each call that he made upon the county. In apportioning troops, it was customary to divide the number called for among the various counties of the state according to population.

Women were no less loyal than the men and suffered untold hardships that husbands, brothers and fathers might enter the field. The privation endured during those four years of war can never be adequately described. Men suffered untold hardships on the battlefield, but the dangers from battle were but a small part of those suffered in camp or on the march. Privation and exposure wrought far greater havoc in the ranks than ever shot and shell.

The hardships of those at home were increased by the depreciated currency, causing high prices and a correspond-

ing difficulty in getting the necessities of life. Everything possible was done to minimize those hardships, but even these efforts availed but little in meeting the actual needs of the hour. Woodford county expended \$41,761.24 in aiding the families of soldiers, while the husbands and fathers were at the front.

At the breaking out of the war the population of Woodford was given as 13,281, out of which number 1,643 soldiers were accredited to the county, during the four years of the struggle. In other words fully twelve per cent of the total population of the county was in the field. These were scattered among various regiments and companies but a number of these were almost entirely recruited in this county while still others often had two or three soldiers from it. The government did all that was possible to prevent a draft. A bounty was offered to each soldier enlisting but it finally became necessary to resort to a draft in some townships. Substitutes were frequently employed to take the place of the man who had been drafted but did not care to go. Various figures were paid for these substitutes, \$500 to \$600 being a popular price, but in some cases it reached \$1,000. Some townships sought to guard against draft by the offer of a liberal bounty in addition to that offered by the national government. In other instances a number of men banded themselves together to protect themselves from draft. Sometimes there were ten and at other times twenty members, each agreeing to pay his part toward the purchase of a substitute, should one of their number be drafted. In some cases men were drafted and accepted, who had enlisted earlier in the war and had been rejected because of some physical disability that rendered them unfit for service. This was due to the great need for men later in the war that rendered the government less exacting.

The union plan of the war contemplated four great movements, 1st, the opening of the Mississippi river; 2nd, the blockading of the southern ports; 3rd, the marching thru the enemies' country to the sea; 4th, the capture of

Richmond. Woodford county soldiers were principally engaged in movements for opening the Mississippi and for opening the south.

The first company having a large part of its enlistment made up of Woodford county men, was Company G of the Seventeenth Infantry. It was captained by Otis A. Burgess, a Christian minister, who was at one time president of Eureka College. Burgess Memorial Hall, of that institution was erected in his honor, largely thru the generosity of his widow. On his resignation in April, 1862, Lieutenant Johnathan H. Rowell was promoted to the captaincy. He had been a student in Eureka College, and made an excellent record both during and after the war. He became prominent in the political life of Bloomington and later represented that district in congress. The regiment of which this company was a part was mustered into the service at Peoria, May 25, 1861, and June 17th it left for Alton, where it spent some time arming and drilling, after which it entered into the active hostilities of Missouri. It took part at Fort Henry and Donaldson, and also in the terrible conflict at Pittsburg Landing, April 6th and 7th. The regiment was under fire the entire day of the sixth. The battle raged with varying success, and at nightfall General McClelland formed his ranks for the eighth time. Thru the entire bitter contest the seventeenth fought valiantly, and in the morning took part in the stubborn conflict that resulted in driving the enemy from the field. In the two days' battle the regiment lost 130 killed and wounded, several of whom were from Woodford county. During the next six months the regiment was engaged in numerous movements in that region, and later went to Vicksburg and took part in the final investment of that city. After the surrender of Vicksburg took place, it remained there doing garrison duty and making excursions into the enemy's country. The regiment was mustered out at Springfield in May, 1864, their term of service having expired.

The Forty-seventh Infantry also contained the names of



many from Woodford, companies B and I being largely made up from the county. Captain Daniel Miles of Washington, for whom the Dan Miles Post, G. A. R., of Eureka, is named, was the first captain of company B, but was soon promoted to lieutenant-colonel, and was followed in turn by Captain Joseph B. Miles, Benjamin F. Biser, and Diego C. Ross. Company I was captained by Samuel S. Jackman and Chester Andrews, the former being from Linn township and the latter from Minonk.

The regiment was organized and mustered into the service of the United States at Peoria, August 16th, 1861. On the 23rd of September it moved to St. Louis, going into quarters at Benton Barracks near that city. It remained there doing garrison duty and drilling until December. In February, 1862, it joined Pope's command, and accompanied him on his advance toward Corinth. In the engagement October 3rd and 4th, the regiment lost 30 killed and over 100 wounded. It joined General Rosecrans, and on the first of April, 1863, the regiment disembarked near Vicksburg. Here the men were assigned to various duties. May 22nd, it participated in a charge on Vicksburg, suffering quite a heavy loss. The remainder of the time of service after the fall of that city was spent by this regiment guarding the Memphis and Charleston line of railroad, and in service in the vicinity of Vicksburg. It returned to that city after a severe campaign lasting three months. October 11th, the regiment was discharged at Springfield. It was re-organized, and again went south into Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi. After the fall of Mobile, the regiment marched with the Sixteenth army corps to Montgomery, Alabama, and was later stationed at Selma. It was mustered out Jan. 21st, 1866.

The Seventy-seventh Infantry contained three companies in which a number of Woodford county men were enlisted. Company C was the first of these and was captained by Joseph M. McCulloch, who was succeeded by Charles F.

McCulloch on the promotion of the former. Company F was under the command of William W. Cromwell, until May 17, 1864, when James A. Secord succeeded him. Company H was under the command of Captain G. Keedy, up to the time of his death in January, 1863, when Milgrove B. Parmeter succeeded him. The Keedy Post, G. A. R., of Minonk is named in honor of Captain Keedy.

The Seventy-seventh infantry was organized and mustered into the service September 3, 1862, at Peoria. It advanced to Covington, and reported to Major General Gordon Granger. It remained in Kentucky without anything of special importance transpiring, until November, when the regiment went to Memphis, and later advanced to Vicksburg, and participated in the attack on the rebel works. After four days' fighting the attack was abandoned. The regiment behaved admirably in the attack on Arkansas Post January 10th, and was complimented by the general in command. After this the regiment engaged for two months in digging a canal across the point opposite Vicksburg. It remained with Grant during the entire campaign around Vicksburg, and upon the surrender of that stronghold, it took part in the capture of Jackson. The seventy-seventh went south into Louisiana and accompanied General Banks on his advance to Alexandria. The army marched up the Red river, driving the enemy, until they reached the Sabine Cross Roads. The regiment belonged to the division under command of General Ransom and was first ordered to support the cavalry. Before the army could be brought forward, the whole rebel army came down on their force and overwhelmed the entire division. It suffered terribly in this battle, losing 176 officers and men, killed, wounded or made prisoners, leaving only 125 men in the regiment for duty. After this campaign it took part in the reduction of Forts Gaines and Morgan, later joining the army of General Canby, and was with his army in the siege and capture of Spanish Fort Blakely and Mobile. It was mustered out of service in July, 1865, having been engaged in sixteen battles.

Company C of this regiment was made up of men from the vicinity of Cazenovia, Metamora and Linn townships. Company F also contained several men from the region of Metamora and other Woodford county points, no one place being represented by more than a few men. Company I was composed of Minonk and Clayton township volunteers.

Company A of the Eighty-sixth Infantry was recruited in Olio and ElPaso townships. It was under the command of William S. Magarity and later of Joseph Major. It was mustered into the United States service at Peoria, August 27, 1863. On the 8th of September, it went to Louisville, Kentucky, where it joined Buell in his pursuit of Bragg. It was in the advance in the charge at Perryville and suffered a correspondingly heavy loss. The regiment marched into Tennessee, and on Sept. 19th and 20th, participated in the battle of Chickamauga. After this the regiment was engaged in a series of movements, first assisting General Sherman to float his pontoons down the river at night, cross his army and capture a post, following Bragg afterward, then joined an expedition for the relief of Burnside, taking part in a reconnoissance as far as Buzzard Roost, and in the fight at Resaca, Ga. It lost heavily in the charge at Kenesaw.

The regiment joined Sherman in his famous march to the sea, reaching Savannah, Dec. 11th, 1864. In January it started north thru the Carolinas, arriving at Richmond, May 7th, and Washington, May 19th. It participated in the grand review at Washington, D. C., in which thousands of battle tried veterans marched down the streets and were reviewed by the chief officers of the union. June 21st, the regiment received its discharge.

Company D, captained by David R. McCutcheon, contained men from Eureka, Panola, Minonk and other Woodford county points, while company E, captained by Winfield M. Bullock, and later by William A. Davison, contained volunteers from Eureka, Metamora, Secor and Roanoke. The regiment was organized at Peoria

and mustered into the service Aug. 28th, 1863. Leaving Peoria it went into Kentucky, where it remained until December, when it joined Sherman in his expedition against Vicksburg. On the disembarkment of this army, the enemy was found strongly fortified on the bluff's northeast of the city. The regiment took a prominent part in the union attack. Sharp skirmishing took place during the day, and the soldiers remained under arms during the night. In the morning they were ordered to retake the position of the previous day. They remained at the front until midnight, when they withdrew and with a battery from Chicago, covered the retreat of the army. This withdrawal of the forces was so well planned that the enemy did not know of the retreat until it was accomplished. The 108th was highly complimented for its conduct in this conflict. It also took part in the capture of Arkansas Post, after which the regiment moved to a point almost opposite Vicksburg. The months of February and March witnessed the death of 135 members of the regiment from disease, due to exposure and unsanitary conditions. During the two months of their stay opposite Vicksburg, they were engaged on the famous canal. One day during its occupation of Young's Point, the 108th received a command to go down the river on guard duty; shortly after a second order came to go up to Milliken Bend to take part in a charge. The officers sent an inquiry as to which order to obey, and were told to follow the first while an Iowa regiment was assigned to the charge. As soon as the enemy witnessed the preparations for attack, they charged the Iowa regiment and half of them were killed. The 108th thus escaped practical annihilation by obedience of the first order. The last of April the iron-clad gunboat, La Fayette, carrying the 108th, ran the batteries of Vicksburg and reached the battlefield of Fort Gibson in time to participate in the victory. It won honorable mention by its admirable conduct in the battle at Champion Hills. It later returned to Vicksburg, and was engaged in various duties. It furnished heavy details of men for the heavy mortars of the boats,

and a number of men were permanently disabled by the concussion from the discharge of the mortars.

Later it marched into Tennessee and took part in the battle at Brice's Cross roads, which resulted in a union defeat, but the 108th was the last to leave the field, and then only when it had used its last cartridge and found it impossible to gain a fresh supply. The regiment took part in the capture of Mobile, Captain W. M. Bullock being severely wounded in the siege. It was discharged from the service at Chicago, Aug. 11th, 1865.

Early in the spring of 1864, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Ohio tendered the president 85,000 one-hundred day men to relieve the veteran soldiers from guard duty at our forts, arsenals and elsewhere. Illinois furnished thirteen regiments and two battalions of the above number.

Company C of the 139th regiment had the names of a number of volunteers from Eureka. It was under the command of Dietrich C. Smith, and was mustered into service at Peoria, June 1st, 1864, and on the 8th of June, was moved to St. Louis. From there it went to Columbus, Ky., and later to Cairo, where it remained until August as garrison, a part of its duty being to guard prisoners. It took part in the pursuit of a guerilla party that had been preying on the neighboring country. September 25th, it was ordered to Peoria to be mustered out, but just at that time General Price was moving toward St. Louis, which was imperfectly guarded. President Lincoln ordered the 139th to that city. The time of enlistment had expired, but when the men understood the situation they willingly obeyed the order. President Lincoln commended the men highly for their patriotism in going to his command after the expiration of their time. The regiment was mustered out of the service after having been on duty five months.

Woodford county also sent loyal soldiers to the front in the cavalry regiments. Cavalry duties were quite severe as these soldiers were so frequently employed on scouting expeditions.

Company G of the Fourth Cavalry was made up of numerous Woodford county men. It was under the command of Harry D. Cook, until his promotion, when he was succeeded by Elijah H. Baker. The greater portion of the recruits came from the region of El Paso or over the line in McLean county. The regiment was mustered into the service September 26, 1861, having been organized by Judge T. Lyle Dickey, of Ottawa. It went to Springfield, where it received arms, which were left in their cases until Cairo was reached. In December, 1861, a reconnoissance of Columbus was ordered and the Fourth Cavalry became the advance of the movement. It took part in the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson, and April 6th and 7th, participated in the battle of Pittsburg Landing. After that victory it was kept pretty busy scouting the front. It went with the army against Corinth. The time between that and the arrival of the regiment at Vicksburg was spent in scouting. It was mustered out of the service at Springfield, in November, 1864. When it left Cairo to enter the field it numbered 1,100 men, when it came back it had but 340.

In October, 1861, Robert G. Ingersoll, of Peoria, and Basil D. Meek, of Eureka, received permission to organize a regiment of cavalry, made up of recruits from Woodford, Tazewell, Peoria and other neighboring counties. It was mustered into the United States service Dec. 20, 1861, but remained in Camp Lyon, Peoria, until Feb. 22nd, 1862, when the regiment broke camp and marched to Benton Barracks, near St. Louis. The first experience under fire was at Pittsburg Landing. The regiment was on duty between Pittsburg Landing and Corinth up to the capture of that place. The eleventh saw hard fighting at Bolivar, Tenn., Corinth and Iuka, and during the winter of 1862-'63 Col. Ingersoll, with several others, was captured and paroled. The entire history of the regiment was one constant activity, moving from place to place, taking part in a great number of movements and battles. Basil D. Meek, one of the organizers, was Lieutenant Colonel, and after the resignation of Inger-

soll, owing to his parole, Mr. Meek acted as colonel for a time, resigning his position in 1863. The close of the war brought joy to the hearts of the members of many Woodford county homes, and all rejoiced that the long, weary war was over, but there were many who went out who never returned, and the tribute of a grateful nation can never be too fully given to the valiant, sacrificing soldiers of the civil war.

Tears for the grief of the father,  
For a mother's anguish, tears;  
But for him that died for his country,  
Glory and endless years.

—HOWELLS.

At home the loyal patriots, who were prevented from going to the front by one reason or another, banded themselves together in a League, known as the Loyal Sons of America and gave moral support to the cause of the Union in every way possible.

Woodford county also proved loyal in other ways as well in the great Civil War.

#### **Black Hawk War.**

The settlers suffered but little actual trouble from the Indians, altho the Black Hawk war produced a feeling of dread among them. The conflict with the rebellious chief was farther north than Woodford. Black Hawk had watched the encroachments of the whites with a jealous eye, and when the Indians were asked to yield the region of the mouth of the Rock river, he refused to obey, and in 1831 made his open defiance. The first campaign was without bloodshed, but the second, in 1832, was far more serious. There were constant rumors of impending dangers that kept the pioneers in a state of unrest. Henry B. Meek, of Walnut Grove, was captain of the Home Guards and was called to gather twelve men for the conflict with the Indians. He is said to have been at the plow when the command came and immediately set about the task of raising men. Among those who were in this war from Woodford county are found the

names of John and James Benson, Jonathan Baker, John E. Davidson, Thomas A. McCord, Jesse Oatman, Allen Patrick, William Blair, John and Robert Bird, Josiah Moore and James Phillips.

It was but a day's travel to the point where depredations were being committed, and it was not known how soon the Indian forces might fall upon the unprotected settlers. The people were on their guard. In the vicinity of Walnut Grove, the dogs one night kept up a constant barking about the home of Mr. Watkins, and the family feared that Indians were skulking about the woods, altho no attack was made. This anxiety led him, together with Joseph, Daniel, Henry Meek and others to take their families south to the vicinity of Little Mackinaw, in the Railsback settlement, where there would be less danger. As soon as they had brought them to a place of safety, the men returned to protect their homes and stock. A party stayed at night in a log barn belonging to Daniel Meek and watched lest there be a night attack. It was composed of Noel Meek, Joseph Meek, Jonathan Baker, John Kellum, William Blair and Daniel Meek. They were armed with rifles and were prepared to give the enemy a warm reception, should any attack occur, but they had no opportunity of showing what could be done. The feelings of the settlers were being constantly harrowed by reports of what the Indians had done. On one occasion they were reported to have captured two young girls north of here. So great was the excitement over the fate of the girls and so deep was the anxiety for their safety that a ransom was offered and accepted for their release. The settlers in the vicinity of Greene township were also considerably disturbed and left their cabins to seek safety in the more thickly settled region of Walnut Grove. The soldiers, who were in the war from this county, were only in the service a short time, being enrolled May 4th, at Bloomington, and mustered out May 27th, 1832 at the mouth of Fox river, 130 miles from the place of enrollment. No lives were lost among them. They were under command of Captain Robert McClure, of



McLean county. After a severe defeat Black Hawk was finally captured, and the war ended. All the fighting had taken place in the region of the Rock river. This war put an end to the trouble with the Indians in this part of the country. From that time forward the whites had undisputed possession of the land. Black Hawk himself went to Iowa and in time built him a house and settled on a farm, where he died at the age of 72 years.

#### **Mexican War.**

Woodford county was not greatly affected by the Mexican war, and was not so largely represented in that conflict as might have been expected. As in all other wars men were valiant and unflinching in their performance of duty, ever ready for service, whatsoever that might be.

#### **Spanish-American War.**

The Spanish-American war also found volunteers from Woodford county, altho the actual enlistment was small, yet there were many ready to volunteer at once should the need become manifest.

Of those enlisted, the name of Captain Kerrick is most prominent. By faithful service he rose to the lieutenancy of Company D of the Second Illinois Infantry. On July 25th, 1899, he was commissioned captain of Company F of the Thirtieth Illinois Infantry. Since the close of the war he has remained in the regular army and is now stationed at the coast defence, where he has done excellent service, in the

## CHAPTER XIII.

### Storms and Epidemics.

**W**OODFORD county has been comparatively free from serious storms and epidemics, yet there have been epidemics in its history that wrought havoc among the people and there have been storms that have carried destruction with them. In 1849 the cholera broke out and claimed numerous victims. All the horrors of the great plague were upon the pioneers. The agony of the sufferer, the isolation he had to endure, and the gloom of the silent burial by night were all present. In 1852 a second outbreak of the dread disease occurred. Among those taken from the prominent ranks of settlers was Ben. Major, founder of Eureka College. The loss of life was more serious than in the previous epidemics.

#### Storms.

As has been observed the early settlers endured much from severe winters and great storms. The winter of 1830-'31 will always be remembered in history as the year of the great snow, causing widespread suffering, but the winter of 1836-'7 witnessed a storm that wrought even greater destruction to stock and caused at least two deaths in the county. It was in mid-winter and the weather had been unusually mild. Suddenly it turned bitterly cold. Stock that was any distance from shelter was frozen before it could be reached. A Mr. Butler and his daughter in Part-ridge township were caught by the storm and before they could reach a place of safety both had been frozen to death. Their bodies were not found for several days and then they

were frozen so stiff as to render it necessary that they be put in large boxes for burial when the weather would permit.

Wind storms have also wrought havoc in the county at various times. It has been visited by several storms that have swept everything before them, and have left paths of ruin behind them. Fortunately the territory covered by these has been limited, yet they have left a record of destruction that is heart rending.

The first great storm occurred in 1858. It occurred May 13th, toward evening. It had been threatening during the day, but toward night a heavy wind began blowing from the west. It lulled a few minutes and the worst of the storm seemed passed, when the wind suddenly shifted to the north and blew a hurricane. It was not a tornado but a strong wind blowing with unexampled fury. It was widespread in its destruction and all parts of the county suffered from its ravages. Trees were uprooted or broken off; barns were destroyed; houses moved from their foundations or destroyed, and stock was injured. It is impossible that any adequate account of the actual damage can ever be given, so broadcast was its destruction.

Near Eureka the house of Jacob Felter was destroyed. The building was not entirely finished, and was probably not as strong as it otherwise would have been, yet it was near enough completion to enable the family to live comfortably in it. Mr. Felter had gone out during the lull to look after his stock, and the side of the house fell on him. His feet extended from under the wall and his wife tried to raise it from his body, but was unable to do so. When it was raised from him he was dead. Another death occurred as a result of the storm, Mrs. Otto, residing near Secor, being killed by it. In Clayton township Mrs. Susanna Tallyn had a thrilling experience, and a narrow escape from death. She still remembers with horror that terrible night with its dangers. Her husband was outside looking after the stock when the storm came up. They were also living in a house

that was not completed, yet it was regarded perfectly safe. The storm destroyed the house and caught Mrs. Tallyn between the wall and the stove in such a manner that it was necessary to cut her clothing away before she could be removed. She and three small children were in the house together when the storm came, but as if by a miracle none of them were seriously injured. Mr. Tallyn, who was on the outside, was injured by having one of the out buildings fall on him. William Worthington, who lived near Mr. Tallyn's also suffered damage from this storm, while the house of Dolphus Forney was one of the many blown from its foundation. The night following the storm was one of fear and dread. It continued, tho less fiercely, during the night, and with the morning came a full revelation of the havoc it had wrought

The second great storm occurred October 19th, 1875. This time it was a fierce tornado, which crossed Roanoke and Clayton townships, doing vast injury to property and causing consternation among the people. This storm was first seen in the vicinity of Washington, and had the appearance of a great revolving mass of clouds in the air. There were abundant evidences of impending danger should it come to the ground. It did not come down, however, until it reached Woodford county, in the neighborhood of Roanoke township. It struck the Bingham school house and dashed it to pieces. School had just been dismissed and but for the foresight of the teacher, who just succeeded in getting the children outside the path of the storm, some of them would undoubtedly have been killed. It destroyed the house of E. E. Bingham, the family escaping by going to the cellar. At Thomas Marshall's, part of the house was destroyed, and a great stone in front of it was moved several feet. The storm took its course toward A. C. Bullington's house. Here the building was dashed to pieces, and Mr. Bullington and children saved themselves by clinging to the hedge. The Jeter school was next in its course and was broken into a thousand pieces. A part of the blackboard is said to have

been found in Minonk township. C. H. Waldron's house was destroyed as was also Gideon Jeter's barn. Mrs. Charlotte Stimpert's house was destroyed. All the family but Philip succeeded in getting into the cellar. He was carried some distance with the house, but was finally dropped without serious injury. Mr. Stimpert still has a vivid recollection of the storm and its results. He remembers that they had four wagons, two of which were new, and the storm took the spokes out of every wheel but one. The front part of one wagon was carried a half mile. The house of Mrs. Mary de Freise was destroyed, and she was injured. George Leonard's house suffered the common fate, as did also Mr. Snyder's home. He was the only one killed in the county as a result of the storm. The barn and trees about Henry Memmen's place were blown down, and Wait Uphoff's house was completely destroyed.

The storm was not wide, the main track of it being little over a hundred feet in width. Corn, which was just ready for husking was blown to the ground, and husking was done with great difficulty. There were numerous freaks of the wind in its wild flight across the prairies. At George Leonard's the baby was picked up and left on a straw stack, practically uninjured but with its clothing torn from its body. Posts were drawn from the ground and carried a distance and dropped with their pointed ends downward with such force as to drive them into the ground as solidly as if they had been set there by the hand of man. A stove in which there was fire was picked up and set on a straw stack, setting it on fire. A molasses bucket was picked up at the home of Thomas Marshall and carried to Samuel Bally's a mile away and the lid still remained on the bucket. Several horses were killed by having rails driven thru their bodies. A quilt from A. C. Bullington's was picked up near Minonk.

The storm was of short duration and did not cover a great extent of territory, but wrought complete havoc wherever it went.

In June, 1899, a tornado passed over a part of the county doing considerable damage. It came to the ground this side of Deer Creek and moved in a northeasterly direction. It appeared to move up and down, striking one place and skipping the next. Southeast of Eureka it wrought havoc in the midst of the timbers. Great trees were uprooted in large numbers, and there were many signs of the storm's terrible work. The home of Robert Barrett was dashed to pieces. The occupants were absent at the time and suffered no injury. A number of other places were damaged, altho no other house was destroyed.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### Political Views.

**P**OLITICALLY the county has usually been democratic, the vote at the first presidential election after the county organization, being Polk, democratic, 322, Clay, whig, 159. There have been occasional lapses from faithful adherence to the democratic party, but the presidential candidates on that ticket had a plurality in the county up to 1896, since which time the tide on presidential years has been in favor of the republicans. Prior to that year an occasional republican candidate for county office would be elected, but since then the offices have been almost equally divided between the two leading parties. At the present time the honors are quite equally distributed.

The campaigns for several years have been very close with the rivalry between county candidates especially strong.

Altho the elections were for many years one-sided affairs, they were not robbed of their intense interest, Torch-light processions, bands of music, floats, banners, and fire-works were the characteristics of the campaigns for many years. Each side sought to make the greater display, and have the longer procession. There was the old fashioned barbecue, attended by thousands of enthusiastic party adherents.

One of the most striking of these was that in which Lincoln and Douglas held their famous debate. Slavery was the vital issue of that day, and the people saw in it the all

absorbing question. Woodford county was deeply interested in the solution of the problem. There were men of the Abolition type, who would not hesitate in using every means possible for the uprooting of slavery, and who were especially strong in their opposition to the fugitive slave law.

With men of this stamp in the county and with others of opposite views, it is not surprising that the appearance of Lincoln and Douglas in their famous campaign, should awaken an intense interest, that found vent in great enthusiasm for the respective senatorial candidates. The issues were closely drawn. Lincoln opposed the further extension of slavery, while Douglas advocated the allowing each state to decide for itself its attitude on slavery. The candidates for senators made a thoro canvass of the state, and they visited one point in Woodford county, Metamora. It was not one of the seven places at which joint debates were held, but the candidates appeared within about a week of each other. Douglas appeared there September 30th, 1858. The date on which these addresses took place is in doubt. The committee having charge of the preparation of the bronze tablet erected in the park at Metamora at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the debate, fixed the date of the Douglas address as October 2nd, 1858, while that of Lincoln's address was October 9th, 1858, just one week later. These dates each fell on Saturday. Other evidences seem to point to Thursday, September 30th, as the date of the appearance of the Little Giant, while Lincoln spoke the following Thursday, October 7th.

Thousands of people gathered to hear the Douglas address. The speaker was met at Washington and was escorted to Metamora. The delegation was met by the Woodford County Men's Democratic club three miles out of town, and delegations from Eureka, Minonk, Spring Bay and other places were in the procession. Minonk had eight four horse teams in line. There were banners bearing such signs as the following: "Popular Sovereignty;" "Let the People



Rule;" "No Nigger Equality." The meeting was held in the grove half a mile out of town. There was boundless enthusiasm when Col. Roberts made the address of welcome.

Douglas was known as the "Little Giant," and was an effective speaker. He foretold democratic victory.

Mr. Lincoln was hailed by a crowd about equal in size to that which greeted Douglas. He was better known to the people of the county than his opponent because he had practiced here so much and was a general favorite. He was not so polished in his manner of address as his antagonist, but there was a clear, forcible logic about his speeches that carried his hearers with him in his argument. The day was characterized by much the same display that was witnessed when Douglas was there. One of the features of the procession was the gaily dressed riders representing the states of the union. Banners, bearing various inscriptions were borne in the procession. One of these excited a storm of opposition from the Douglas party, and threats were made against it. The banner represented Douglas pulling a boat load of slaves across the Ohio into Illinois.

Lincoln's speech was characteristic of the campaign. At heart he was opposed to slavery, and used all of his eloquence to arouse the people to oppose its extension.

The fiftieth anniversary of this great debate was celebrated in 1908. The exercises in this county were held in connection with the Old Settlers' picnic, August 27, 1908. A great concourse of people gathered, of which number a few were present at the original Lincoln and Douglas meetings, and took part in the celebration. A bronze tablet bearing the following inscription was erected:

**Spoke Here.**

Douglas, October 2nd, 1858. Lincoln, October 9th, 1858.  
Dedicated by Old Settlers and Historical Associations of  
Woodford County, August 27, 1908.

The tablet was not erected on the site on which the celebrated addresses were made, as that was a short distance

outside the city, but was placed in the park. Underneath the tablet was placed a box containing coins, papers and other objects that would be of interest in the future.

Another campaign that was of unusual interest was that for the election of county officers in 1865. The excitement was intense, and the entire republican ticket composed as follows, was elected: Superintendent, John Buckingham; surveyor, E. W. Dickinson; county clerk, George Kinnear; treasurer, Joseph M. McCulloch; county judge, William S. Magarity.

The custom prevailed for many years of holding great political meetings attended by crowds drawn from miles around. One of the great rallies held in the county was the Logan meeting at El Paso, October 6, 1872. It was attended by thousands of people. Logan was very popular, especially with the soldier class, who loved him for his courage. A special train brought a great crowd from Bloomington, and there was tremendous enthusiasm. More than a thousand came from that city alone, and one of the features of the parade was the full company of colored men from the Evergreen city.

Another great rally was that held at Eureka in the campaign of 1888, when John M. Palmer and Andrew Jackson Bell, candidates for governor and lieutenant governor on the democratic ticket, were present and made addresses both afternoon and evening. There was an immense crowd, a long procession and banners of all sorts.

The next campaign there was a great demonstration at Mionk at which Gov. Joseph W. Fifer was the principal speaker. There was the usual throng of excited party adherents, and the great torchlight procession. The Eureka umbrella brigade headed by Stumpf's Military Band was the most attractive delegation in the parade.

Another campaign that had novel features was that in which Benjamin H. Harrison was a candidate for president on the republican ticket against Grover Cleveland on

the democratic. It derived its novelty from the fact that Mr. Harrison was a grandson of William Henry Harrison, of Tippecanoe fame, who was elected to the presidency in 1840. Features of the campaign of 1840 were introduced into that of 1888. The log cabin, with the barrel of cider by the door, and the raccoon chained to the cabin, were features of the processions. The democrats retaliated with various banners, among which was that with the motto: "Grand-pa's hat won't fit Bennie."

In recent years the campaign of pomp and display has given way to one of newspaper discussion, the so-called campaign of education. Time alone will tell the results. It is no longer necessary to ride for miles to hear a discussion of affairs of the day. The daily newspapers and magazines give a complete resume of the entire subject, far more comprehensive than can be gained from a single address.

There have been other questions aside from the usual political issues that have from time to time drawn the attention of the voters of the county. In 1855 a prohibitory proposition was presented to the county, and those interested in local option will notice that the county at that early day stood two to one against the prohibition idea, the vote being 390 for to 668 against it.

Another proposition frequently submitted was that of permitting stock to run at large. After several votes had been taken the proposition to keep stock off the roads carried in 1872 by a vote of 1,128, for keeping up stock, to 929 against it.

The annexed tables give the vote of Woodford on presidential candidates since the organization of the county, and also the list of county officers since it was formed.

## LIST OF WOODFORD COUNTY OFFICERS.

Date	County Commissioners.	Sheriff	Coroner.	School Commissioner	Surveyor
1841	James Boys, Joseph Meek, Josiah Moore	.....	.....	Matthew Bracken..	S. S. Parke .....
1842	Horace Crocker .....	Wm. S. Magarity ..	Wm. Hoshor .....	.....	.....
1843	Jefferson Hoshor ..	.....	Levi Clifton .....	John H. Robbins ..	Ben W. Kindig ..
1844	James Richardson ..	John Summers ..	John W. Page .....	John Summers ..	Ben W. Kindig ..
1845	Harlow Barney .....	.....	.....	John W. Page .....	.....
1846	Era Y. Munn .....	Wm. C. Martin .....	Samuel J. Bart .....	L. C. Blakebee .....	.....
1847	James Richardson ..	.....	.....	Lyman C. Mackler ..	.....
1848	Harlow Barney .....	David Irving .....	A. J. Genoways .....	Chas. Rich .....	.....
	<b>3 Associate Justice</b>	.....	.....	.....	.....
1849	Wm. C. Poynter ..	.....	.....	Chas. Rich .....	.....
	Wm. E. Buckingham	.....	.....	.....	Mordecia Bullock..
1850	.....	George Ray .....	.....	.....	.....
1851	.....	.....	Samuel Mundell ..	.....	.....
1852	.....	Wm. C. Martin ..	Evan Trunnell .....	Chas. Rich .....	C. H. Chitty .....
1853	John C. Harvey ..	.....	.....	.....	.....
	Abner Mundell .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1854	.....	George Ray .....	Samuel L. Kirby ..	Edgar Babeock .....	.....
1855	.....	.....	.....	John G. Walker .....	Joseph J. Perry ..
1856	.....	Abiah Minor .....	Benj. W. Kindig ..	.....	.....
1857	.....	.....	.....	J. J. Harvey .....	Joseph S. Hammers
1858	.....	Noel B. Meek .....	Henry Stringer .....	.....	.....
1859	.....	.....	.....	Edgar Babeock .....	Isaac J. Marsh .....
1860	.....	R. L. Sidwell .....	J. C. Myers .....	.....	.....
1861	.....	.....	.....	Joseph M. Clark ..	Daniel H. Davison
1862	.....	Lewis H. Bullock ..	Jacob C. Myers .....	.....	.....
1863	.....	.....	.....	Joseph M. Clark ..	Daniel H. Davison

Date	Co. Commissioners	Sheriff	Coroner	Superintendent	Surveyor
1864	.....	Cyrus Fairchild ..	John D. Gardner ..	.....	E. W. Dickinson ..
1865	.....	W. M. Bullock ..	Wm. M. Plank.....	John Buckingham..	.....
1866	.....	.....	.....	.....	Daniel H. Davison ..
1867	.....	Frank Rohman ..	Gideon Jeter ..	.....	Daniel H. Davison ..
1868	.....	.....	.....	Joseph M. Clark ..	Daniel H. Davison ..
1869	.....	Frank Rohman ..	( George Harl ..	.....	.....
1870	.....	.....	( George Painter ..	Wm. H. Gardner ..	Daniel H. Davison ..
1871	.....	Garman Gish ..	James M. John.....	.....	.....
1872	.....	.....	.....	James Kirk ..	Daniel H. Davison ..
1873	.....	J. A. Stephenson ..	James M. John ..	.....	.....
1874	.....	.....	.....	J. E. Lamb ..	Daniel H. Davison ..
1875	.....	Lewis H. Bullock ..	James M. John ..	.....	.....
1876	.....	.....	.....	J. E. Lamb ..	Daniel H. Davison ..
1877	.....	George W. Horner ..	Wm. M. Jeter ..	.....	.....
1878	.....	.....	.....	.....	Chas. Lauenstein ..
1879	.....	Wm H. Wilkerson ..	J. W. Hoffman ..	.....	.....
1880	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1881	.....	.....	.....	James Kirk ..	.....
1882	.....	George W. Horner ..	J. W. Hoffman ..	.....	Chas. Lauenstein ..
1883	.....	.....	James McCoy ..	.....	.....
1884	.....	David M. Owen ..	W. M. Dunlap ..	James Kirk ..	.....
1886	.....	.....	P. L. Tribbey ..	.....	Chas. Lauenstein ..
1888	.....	.....	.....	Lyon Karr ..	.....
1890	.....	Joseph R. Tool ..	P. L. Tribbey ..	.....	.....
1892	.....	C. A. Robeson ..	.....	John F. Sparks ..	Chas. Lauenstein ..
1894	.....	.....	Ferd Seidl ..	.....	D. H. Davison ..
1896	.....	T. W. Gish ..	.....	W. J. Whetzel ..	.....
1898	.....	.....	Ferd Seidl ..	.....	D. H. Davison ..
1900	.....	.....	.....	W. J. Whetzel ..	.....
1902	.....	L. C. Gish ..	D. W. Davison ..	.....	D. H. Davison ..
1904	.....	.....	.....	F. H. Doeden ..	.....
1906	.....	B. F. Slenker ..	.....	.....	.....
1908	.....	.....	W. S. Morrison ..	.....	D. H. Davison ..

## LIST OF WOODFORD COUNTY OFFICERS.—Continued

Date	County Clerk	Treasurer	Circuit Clerk	County Judge	State's Attorney
1841	John J. Perry	James S. McCord	Samuel J. Cross, (2)		David B. Campbell
1842	John J. Perry		Samuel J. Cross		
1843	John J. Perry				David B. Campbell
1844	John J. Perry				
1845			Samuel J. Cross		
1846		Jesse Dale			
1847					
1848	Edgar Babcock	Jesse Dale	Samuel J. Cross	W. P. Brown, (1)	David B. Campbell
1849					
1850		Joshua Jones			
1851			Peter Doty		David B. Campbell
1852	Edgar Babcock	Bazel D. Meek		Wm. E. Buckingham	
1853					
1854		Bazel D. Meek			
1855			Peter Doty		Major W. Packard
1856	Robert B. Hanna	John W. Page		B. D. Meek	
1857					
1858		John W. Page			A. E. Stevenson
1859			James D. Perry		
1860	Robert B. Hanna	O. P. A. Myers		C. H. Chitty	
1861					A. E. Stevenson
1862		Wm. B. Whiffer			
1863			James D. Perry		
1864	Geo. Kinnear	Jos. M. McCulloch		Wm. S. Magarity	
1865					
1866		Henry Prantz			
1867			Wm. Sumner		
1868	Henry C. Dent	Henry Prantz			
1869				B. D. Meek	

Date	County Clerk	Treasurer	Circuit Clerk	County Judge	States Attorney
1870	.....	Henry Frantz	.....	.....	M. L. Newell
1871	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1872	.....	.....	George Thode	.....	.....
1873	Thomas K. Mitchell	Ayrs M. Whittaker	.....	Joseph McCulloch	.....
1874	.....	Ayrs M. Whittaker	.....	.....	.....
1875	.....	.....	.....	.....	Samuel S. Page
1876	.....	Ayrs M. Whittaker	George Thode	Joseph McCulloch	.....
1877	F. M. Bassett	P. H. Davison	.....	.....	.....
1878	.....	W. M. Meek	.....	.....	.....
1879	.....	.....	Nickolas P. Baker	.....	Martin L. Newell
1880	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1881	F. M. Bassett	.....	.....	Walter S. Gibson	.....
1882	Jacob Ray	P. A. Felter	Nickolas P. Baker	.....	Martin L. Newell
1884	.....	.....	.....	Walter S. Gibson	.....
1886	John Leys	P. H. Davison	J. C. Irving	.....	Thomas Kennedy
1888	.....	.....	.....	A. M. Cavan	.....
1890	Thomas Huxtable	John H. Golden	.....	.....	Thomas Kennedy
1892	John Leys	.....	George Jeck	A. M. Cavan	.....
1894	Ed. C. Engel	Ed. Hodgson	.....	.....	George P. Gill
1896	.....	.....	George Jeck	Thomas Kennedy	.....
1898	Ed. C. Engel	Lyon Karr	F. A. VanAlstine	.....	J. A. Reily
1900	.....	.....	.....	Thomas Kennedy	.....
1902	Adolph Woltzen	Joseph Meek	F. A. VanAlstine	.....	John R. Tweddale
1904	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1906	Adolph Woltzen	L. C. Gish	L. H. VanAlstine	J. F. Bosworth	Orman Ridgely
1908	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

1. Prior to 1849 a probate justice was chosen, John B. Holland, James Robeson and Samuel J. Cross served in that capacity.

2. The first recorder was John J. Perry who was then clerk of the commissioners' court.

3. In 1849 the commissioners' court was changed to be made up of a county judge and two associates.

Date	Democrat	Whig	Republican	Prohibition
1844	Polk .... 322	Clay .. 159	.....	.....
1848	Cass .... 306	Taylor. 183	.....	.....
1852	Pierce .. 635	Scott .. 339	.....	.....
1856	Buchanan 747	.....	Fremont. 596	.....
1860	Douglas .. 1419	.....	Lincoln . 1238	.....
1864	McClellan 1685	.....	Lincoln . 1270	.....
1868	Seymour. 2246	.....	Grant ... 1862	.....
1872	Greeley . 1732	.....	Grant ... 1545	.....
1876	Tilden ... 2105	.....	Hayes ... 1733	.....
1880	Hancock 2364	.....	Garfield . 2007	Dow .. 7
1884	Cleveland 2409	.....	Blaine .. 1803	St. John 112
1888	Cleveland 2410	.....	Harrison.. 1812	Fisk .. 165
1892	Cleveland 2500	.....	Harrison.. 1738	Bidwell. 223
1896	Bryan .. 2447	.....	McKinley 2447	Levering 87
1900	Bryan ... 2421	.....	McKinley 2564	Woolley 178
1904	Parker .. 1908	.....	Roosevelt 2371	Swallow 237
1908	Bryan... . 2156	.....	Taft .... 2204	Chapin 203



**ORIGINAL DAVIDSON CABIN.**

The above cabin was erected by Caleb Davidson on the farm northwest of Eureka, directly after coming to the county in 1831. It stood until recently when it fell from decay and the roof alone remains. The man sitting in the cabin doorway is William A., the son of Caleb Davidson.



## CHAPTER XV.

### Industrial.

#### MILLING.

THE milling interests of Woodford county were at one time very extensive and every town of any size had one or more well equipped mills. Wheat was an important product and milling property was considered a good investment. In their prosperous days, the mills of the county represented an investment of \$200,000. Several mills were each valued at \$30,000 or more. Gradually the cultivation of wheat was abandoned. A number of successive failures in the yield discouraged men, who were accustomed to raising wheat, and other grains were raised in its stead. This led to the ruin of the milling business, as wheat could not be shipped in and made into flour in competition with the great mills. They were abandoned one by one until there are now very few remaining as a reminder of more prosperous days.

The history of the first mills erected in the county is contained in the preceding chapters. They were an essential part of the early settlements, as communication with the outside world was slow and difficult, and this condition forced the settler to depend on the home mill. The earliest variety was that operated by horse power, sometimes called a "corn cracker." One of these was found in almost every neighborhood. In 1831 the mill on Panther creek was erected by the Moores, and was the first water mill in the county. It was soon followed by Crocker's mill at Spring Bay and Hoshor's mill at the same place. In 1839 Richardson

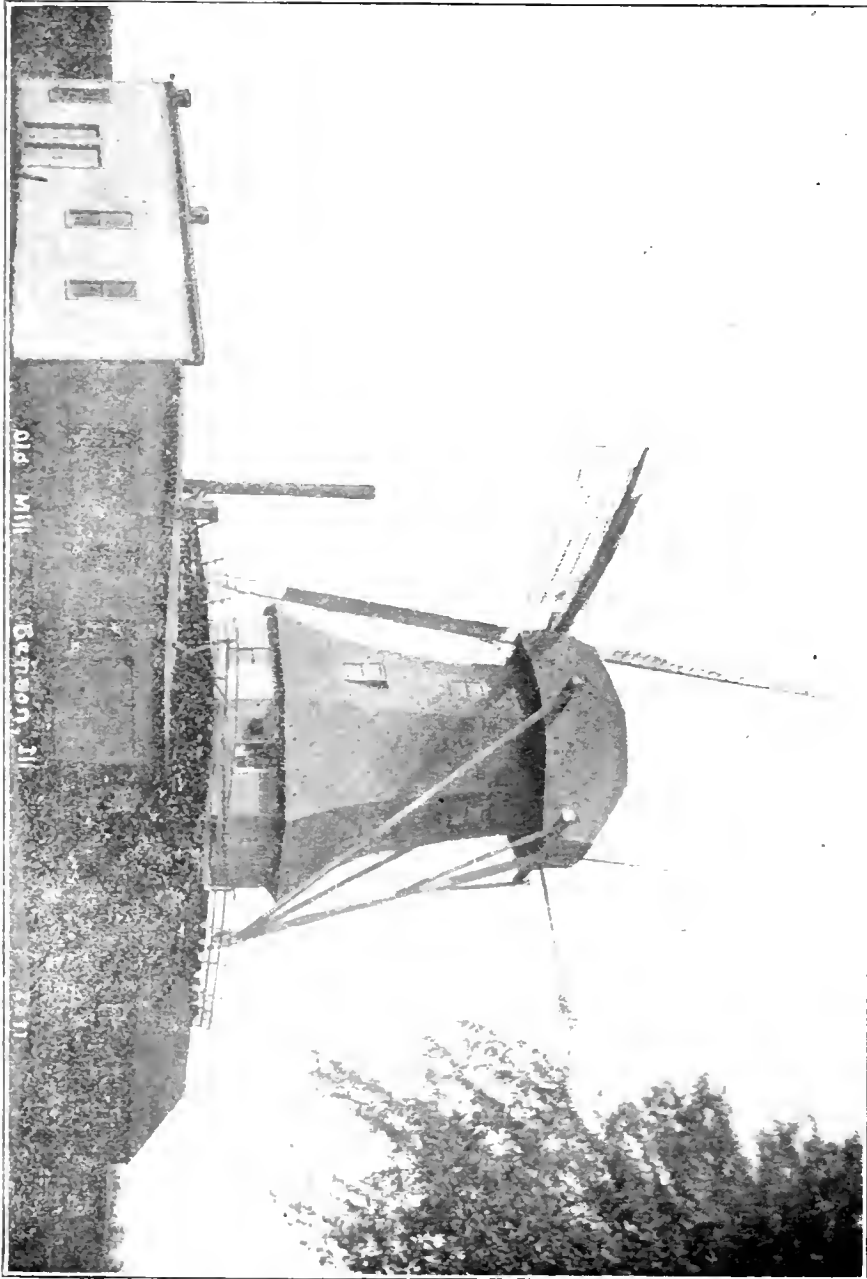
Brothers built another mill on Panther creek, near Bowling Green. These have long ago passed out of existence. The more modern mill represented a much larger investment than did these early outfits. El Paso was once an important milling point. The first was erected by H. and E. Ives. It was a two-story structure and was destroyed by fire in 1869. It was then rebuilt at a cost of more than thirty thousand dollars. In 1868, Geo. L. Gibson erected his milling plant at a cost of \$33,000. Each of these was sold at a great sacrifice and the machinery was moved to points where the business was on a more paying basis.

Eureka also had two splendidly equipped plants. In 1856, the Eureka Milling Company was organized, consisting of John Daist, John Major, George Callender, E. B. Myers and W. S. Bullock. A large flour mill was erected on the site now occupied by the canning factory. It was a large three-story structure, equipped with the best machinery. It later passed into the hands of J. A. Davis and R. D. Smith, the latter finally selling his share to J. J. Mishler. It was destroyed by fire in 1888, entailing a loss of \$30,000 on its owners. The second of these was erected by Van Dyke and Alams, and was located on the southeast corner of the lot now used by T. J. McGuire as a stock yard. It was under the management of W. G. Van Dyke, one of the best millers in Central Illinois. When roller process flour became the leading brand, the mill was furnished with new machinery and operated on the new system. It was destroyed by fire in 1882.

In 1869, Col. Sidwell and James Carrol built a mill on the present site of the elevator owned by N. N. Hettinger, in Secor. This was later operated by L. Gassner. Jan. 30, 1879, shortly after 9:00 A. M., the boiler of this mill exploded, causing the most terrible tragedy ever enacted in Secor. There were four men killed outright, while another was crippled for life. Two of the men were blown across the track, while the engineer was covered with debris in the

engine room. A piece of boiler fell on the school grounds, more than a block distant, and another piece fell thru the roof of a house across the railroad. Those killed were

BENSON MILL.



Christian Mahlstedt, William Collins, Henry Brunce and Charles Wheeler, while Joseph Horn was crippled for life.

The mill was not destroyed at that time, but it long ago passed out of existence.

The Panola mill also suffered from an explosion of its boilers, but it was by no means so serious in its results as it happened at the noon hour, when no one was there. The accident occurred in 1861 and caused great consternation among the people of that quiet village. They left the dinner table to rush to the scene of the disaster. The mill, which was owned by Patrick Hines and John Shepler was greatly damaged by the explosion. It long ago ceased to exist.

Roanoke has one of the few mills now in operation in the county. It was erected in 1877, by Isaac Snyder, and is located near the Santa Fe track, west of the machine shops. It is now controlled by E. E. Husseman.

Benson has for many years possessed a mill that has drawn the attention of men far and wide. It is built on the pattern of the old style Dutch mill. It received its power from four great wings which were propelled by the wind. These were each forty feet in length, and consisted of lattice work, on which canvas could be stretched. When the wind was strong a small amount of canvas was needed; but when the breeze was fainter, a corresponding increase in the amount of canvas was required to produce the needed power. These wings were attached to a revolving cap, that could be turned at the will of the operator in the direction from which the wind was blowing. The machinery was largely made from wood. One of the great wooden wheels which aids in transferring the motion of the wings to the machinery below measures twelve feet and seven inches in diameter. The wooden cog wheels are made with remarkable accuracy and skill. The mill was erected in 1872, by J. M. Schmidt and brother, and was for many years operated by power from the wings alone. In recent years, an engine has been installed and it is no longer run by the wind. It is said that there is but one such mill in Illinois aside from this. No visitor in Benson is satisfied until he has gone thru the now famous mill. It was owned for many years by

F. H. Thielen, but it is now the property of J. H. Monk.

The Minonk mill is now the property of J. H. Kerriek. It was erected in 1867, by Spark and Norris, and in 1874, passed into the hands of its present owner. It is one of those that has continued to exist long after its neighbors have passed away.

As early as 1836, S. S. Parke had a mill near the present site of the village of Metamora, but it was not until 1868 that M. Tool erected his steam flouring mill at a cost of \$10,000.

The same year that witnessed the erection of the Metamora mills saw the construction of a large milling plant at Washburn. August Younker came to that city in 1856, and in the above named year entered the milling business. He ultimately gave up the enterprise and the mill has gone into decay.

Aside from the Crocker and Hoshor mills there was one erected at Spring Bay by Joe Hilenbrand and improved by William Burt. It finally passed into the hands of Ernest Fredricks.

The milling history is fraught with the record of heavy financial loss to many of its investors, yet it was the earliest and consequently one of the most useful features of our industrial life.

### **GRAIN INTERESTS.**

Woodford county has always been an agricultural region. Its great wealth has been in its fertile, productive fields that have rarely failed to yield a rich harvest to the efforts of its tillers. The early dealers in grain stored it in warehouses erected for that purpose. It was many years before an elevator was erected. One of the most serious problems that faced the pioneer was a market for his grain. The markets of Chicago required ten days for a round trip. Peoria and Pekin were nearer, but even those cities were too far distant to be convenient market towns. Some time after the settlement of the county began, a market was opened in

Spring Bay. The first warehouse was erected there by C. A. Genoways and Samuel S. Burt, in 1844. Later Richard Dement built a warehouse, and Lewis and Jackson Williams followed his example and entered the grain and stock business. This firm also were pork packers, and were engaged in the sale of general merchandise at the time. The dealers would buy grain during the winter and store it in their warehouses. When the river traffic opened in the spring, shipment would be made. As it was the only river town, it enjoyed a large shipping trade. It was located at a point that furnished easy means of transportation, and it was natural that grain should be brought for miles to the Spring Bay markets. On the completion of the Illinois and Michigan canal, the facilities for shipment were greatly increased, and for many years the village was the great shipping point for the county. In the height of its prosperity there were four firms buying grain there at the same time. The completion of the railroads thru the county began to undermine the prosperity of the village. More convenient markets were opened and shipments were made by rail instead of by water. There is still, however, a great deal of grain bought in Spring Bay, and the business is a very satisfactory investment. The elevator is owned by Smith, Hippen & Co., of Pekin and is managed by Louis Warner.

The Illinois Central railroad brought the county in connection with the outside world by rail for the first time. New markets were established and these soon became the centers of commercial activity. In 1854 the first grain was purchased in Minonk, Charles Dobson, C. W. Goodrich and Samuel Work being the first dealers. There was no elevator erected until several years after this, but the business grew so rapidly that in 1872 there were four dealers and it was estimated that those shipped 1,250,000 bushels of grain annually. There are now four large elevators in Minonk, three of them located along the Central, and the fourth along the Santa Fe right of way. In 1905 B. M. Stoddard and J. A

Simpson erected new elevators to take the place of the smaller ones they had previously used. The remaining dealers are U. B. Memmen and O. M. Davison.

Kappa was an important grain market before many of the other towns were founded. It was no unusual occurrence for a hundred teams to be there with grain in a day. Probably the first dealer was Fred Niergarth, who had a small warehouse there, but a number of men bought grain at different times. There was, however, no elevator there. The Illinois Central built a large store house, which was later turned into an elevator by William Casenwinkle. This was destroyed by fire. In 1883 the first elevator was built by J. B. Drake and George Lallman. The latter entered other lines of business, but Mr. Drake retained possession until recent years. Three years ago the property was purchased by Summers Bros., who own it at this time. Ed. S. Summers has charge of it.

Panola has prospered in the grain business since its foundation. It originally drew from a wide expanse of territory in both Panola and Greene townships. As in the case of Kappa, there were frequently scores of teams with grain in town in a day. Samuel Bally relates the following interesting experience which will throw some light on the grain trade of Panola. At the time, he was living in Greene township and the Panola dealers were offering a better price for grain than other towns were paying. He was hauling for a neighbor and his team became stalled near Patton's bridge. It was necessary to double teams and before they had gotten their wagons across the stream, there were twenty-four teams waiting, all bound for the Panola elevators. The grain business is now in the hands of F. S. Larison and the Rogers Grain Company.

The first grain sold in El Paso, was bought by William M. Jenkins and his brother, Isaac. They did not have an elevator until a number of years after they had begun business. The first was built by George W. Fridley in 1860, at a

cost of \$6,000. Graft and Webster also built one shortly afterward. This was destroyed by fire in 1863, and was soon rebuilt. In 1871, William Jenkins built an elevator with a capacity of 12,000 bushels of grain, and in 1874 McClellan and Seery erected one. In 1875 Webster and Graft suffered the loss of their second building. The city now has three large elevators, each of which does an extensive business. Miles L. Miller owns one of these while F. S. Larison owns another. The third is owned by the ElPaso elevator company. During the last few years several companies have been formed among the farmers for the purchase of grain. They have erected three large elevators at different points in the county, one company at ElPaso owning one of these. It was organized in 1903 with a capital stock of \$16,000. The following are officers: President, Omer North; secretary, Charles Gull; treasurer, J. T. Cleary; directors, James Wilkey, Louis Kingdon, M. J. Cleary, George Scheer, Charles Armstrong and John Pleasants. F. J. Koerner has been manager the past three years.

For a number of years after the railroad was built thru Eureka, there was no elevator in the town, altho there were several warehouses for the handling of grain. In 1863 J. M. Murray erected the elevator on Callender street. It remained in his possession until he wished to retire from active business, in 1901, when it was purchased by T. J. McGuire, who now owns it. In 1901 P. A. Felter erected a large elevator on College street, and has conducted it since that time.

Roanoke has always been a good grain point. Situated in the heart of a rich prairie region it has been prosperous as a result of the wealth of the surrounding country. Soon after the completion of the railroad in 1872, the first elevator was erected by William and Peter Crow, but it soon passed into the hands of Samuel Hollenback and W. B. Riekey. This elevator was afterwards purchased by Bartlett Frazier & Co., who sold to N. R. Moore. The property is now owned by J. P. Garber. The second elevator was soon erected by



C. K. Snyder. A third grain house was erected on the west side by John Wren, of Washington, in 1895, and it is still owned by Mr. Wren. The first grain elevator in Secor was built by Peter Crow. There are now three in town, one of which is not in operation at present. In 1908 N. N. Hettinger purchased the building erected by J. M. Murray in 1901. This has a capacity of 100,000 bushels. The most recent enterprise is the Farmers' Elevator Company. It is capitalized at \$8,000 and pays 10 per cent dividends. The following are officers: President, W. H. Armstrong; vice-president, John Zeiger; secretary, C. W. Frey; treasurer, L. R. Deiner; directors, C. M. Colburn, John Hunsinger and Gottlieb Stoler. The present manager, Wm. Greiner, assumed control June 15, 1903.

On the completion of the Santa Fe, Benson offered an inviting field for investment. In 1873, Samuel Peterson erected the first elevator in Benson, the building being the one owned by S. L. Peterson. The following year a company, composed of J. B. Miller, A. H. Brubaker and F. D. Learned, erected the elevator now owned by J. E. Eckhart. In 1874 George Fritze & Co., built the third building for handling grain, which was operated by W. A. Pickernell and T. E. Coleman. This finally passed into the hands of James Shields. It has been replaced by a modern elevator that is still owned by Mr. Shields.

Among the earliest grain dealers in Metamora was Peter Willard, who was a member of the firm of Scott and Mum in Spring Bay. This firm did an extensive shipping trade. It was not until after the building of the railroad thru the town that the first elevator was erected by Peter Schertz. There are now two elevators in the town, one owned by J. R. Wagner and the other by H. Wykle.

The building of the Chicago and Alton road opened several good grain markets. The first elevator was built at Low Point in 1874 by Piper, Bayne & Co. It remained in the hands of a company for a number of years, but finally be-

and the property of Banta Bros. & Co. The firm has a well equipped building.

In 1871, W. O. Hammers & Co. erected the first elevator in Courthouse. This was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt by Peter Schmitt. This elevator was purchased in 1895 by Decker Bros. who still operate the grain business there. In 1894 they erected a new grain building.

There is a new elevator building in at Woodford, built in 1897 by A. S. Johnson, the present owner. It is a large well equipped and has an extensive trade.

When the first elevator was built there the grain elevator was owned by G. A. Johnson and George H. T. The first grain dealer in Courthouse was J. F. Tobias, who began business in 1868 after the establishment of the town in 1868. The elevator was owned by Leslie Reed. The grain business moved in 1894 and was established the same year and is now owned by John Neffinger.

There are two elevators now owned, the one owned by Ramsey, Moore & Co. and managed by E. J. Perrine, the other owned by the Farmers' Elevator Company and managed by H. J. Kaufman. The officers are as follows: President, Martin W. Jones; Secretary, F. H. Kaufman; Treasurer, John D. Warrick; Directors, John D. Warrick, W. E. Brattle, James Starnes, John H. Jones, and John R. D. D. Warrick. The officers are as follows: President, Martin W. Jones; Secretary, F. H. Kaufman; Treasurer, John D. Warrick; Directors, John D. Warrick, W. E. Brattle, James Starnes, John H. Jones, and John R. D. D. Warrick.

In 1871 the first elevator was built in Washburn, by S. W. M. Jones. The grain business is now in the hands of M. Jones and R. Jones.

### BANKING

The banking interests of Woodford county have kept pace with the growth of the county. For many years there was no banking in the county and the first steps taken toward the establishment of such institutions were made by men connected with some other line of business and who took banking up as a business. During the past forty years there has been great increase in the amount invested in the



business in the building now occupied by the Woodford County Republican. He amassed a large fortune and on his death left a large amount to different benevolent institutions. On the death of Mr. Davis in 1892, the bank was closed.

In 1882, John Darst organized the Farmers' Bank and the institution has been controlled wholly or in part by members of the Darst family since that time. At present this institution is managed by J. P. Darst and J. A. McGuire.

The State Bank of Eureka was organized under the direction of John Freeman, in 1895. Later Mr. Freeman moved to Mason City and Lyon Karr assumed control of the affairs of the institution. It is capitalized at \$50,000, and is managed by the following directors: Lyon Karr, Ed. C. Engel, W. M. Meek, C. J. Gibson and Jacob Rich.

In 1869, the Minonk Bank was founded by Geo. T. Baker, who was later succeeded by Jenkins, Dunn & Co. In 1873, the Danforth Bank opened, and bought out Jenkins, Dunn & Co., in 1895. The institution is operated by C. R. Danforth & Co, and has been very successful. It is capitalized at \$50,000.

Another bank was opened there about 1903, thru the instrumentality of L. A. Buchner and others, but it continued in business but a few months.

In 1909, an institution was organized known as the Minonk National Bank, with a capital stock of \$50,000, and opened for business in January following. John F. Shepard is cashier of the new institution. The circulation at present is \$12,500.

Altho Benson is one of the smaller towns of the county its banks are very important institutions. The deposits at the present time are about \$400,000.

The Benson Bank was opened in 1880, by B. F. Zinser, who operated it for a number of years. In 1900, the name was changed to the First State Bank of Benson. It has a capital stock of \$25,000 and a surplus of \$20,000. The of-

ficers are as follows: President, S. L. Peterson; vice-president, Joseph Pickard; cashier, F. N. Tallyn; assistant cashier, F. C. Tucker.

A second bank was organized in 1904, by A. H. Brubaker & Co., known as the Farmers' Bank. It is capitalized at \$25,000, and has been liberally patronized since its organization. It is conducted by the following officers: President, A. H. Brubaker; cashier, M. C. Brubaker; assistant cashier, R. C. Ficken.

The banking interests have grown to be quite extensive in Washburn. In 1869, Frank N. Ireland organized a bank, that has been in operation since that time. Mr. Ireland came to Woodford county in 1855 and has been one of the leading men of the county since that time.

In June, 1908, the People's Bank of Washburn was organized with the following officers: President, Wm. G. West; vice-president, J. F. Shepard; cashier, L. F. Shepard. It is capitalized at \$50,000.

The banking interests of Metamora have been of more recent development than other features of its history. In the days prior to the organization of the Schertz institution, Isaac Wykoff founded a bank in connection with his drug business. In 1873, the Metamora Bank was established by James F. Earl, and in a couple of years it passed into the hands of John W. and Adino Page. In 1885, Peter and David Schertz assumed charge of it, and continued in control for a number of years. In September, 1902, Heiple and Kingsbury purchased the bank and continued to control it from that time, until December 15th, 1908, when it was purchased by Snyder Brothers.

The first banking interests in Secor were in the hands of Henry Dierking. January 1st, 1902, the First National Bank of Secor was organized. The following are the officers: President, F. B. Stitt; vice-president, C. W. Frey; cashier, E. J. Harseim; directors, J. Gilmore, Robert Hitch, John VanSeyoc and George Burster. It is capitalized at

\$25,000, and has \$4,500 surplus.

The banking interests of Roanoke have grown to be of great importance. The early banking was in the hands of Herbst, Altofer and Sauder, but in 1895 the Farmers' Bank was organized. It has prospered and is now controlled by the following officers; President, H. D. Harms; cashier, L. W. Harms; assistant cashier, H. D. Hollenback.

Low Point has a bank conducted by Banta Bros. & Co., and connected with their other extensive business interests. It belongs to the Bankers Association. Bachman Bros., at Cazenovia also do some banking business.

These fifteen institutions, thirteen of which have separate banking establishments, represent the banking interests of Woodford county. They represent an investment of more than half a million in capital stock, while an additional one hundred thousand is represented in the surplus and undivided profits of the institutions. It is estimated from the report of the Bankers' Directory of 1908, that the deposits at the present time approach two million dollars.

#### THE PRESS.

No single influence has been more potent in developing the county than has the press. It has invariably stood for progressive movements, and, with a few exceptions, a high moral standard has been maintained. There are now nine weekly papers published in the county. The first was established at Metamora in 1854, altho the earlier issues were not printed there. The greater number of these are non-partisan, but the center of the political arena is the county seat, where each of the leading political parties has an exponent of its doctrines, the democratic party being represented by The Democrat-Journal, while the republican ideas are championed by the Woodford County Republican.

In 1854, the Woodford County Times was established. It was published in Peoria by Phattonberg and Mann and was brought to Metamora for distribution. As the wagon

fastened to a pole and carried as a flag. The paper was later published by Calvin McKenzie and Mark Aiken. The first press was of the army style, which consisted of a flat bed and a small cylinder, that, when revolved, drew the bed and type beneath it, making an impression. No roller was used and the ink was merely daubed on the type. The paper, which became known as the Woodford Sentinel, changed hands several times, passing into the possession of W. B. Whiffen in 1860, and was published by him until 1866. In that year Power & Harl assumed control of it. Later Mr. Power sold out and Mr. Harl continued its publication. In 1889, A. L. Hereford began the publication of the Herald. It was continued for a short time and John Knoblauch purchased both papers and united them. It was later published by Miss Henrietta Knoblauch and her sister. November 10, 1904, W. Ryan purchased the plant and paper. He has introduced a number of new features, among them, occasional historical sketches, that have been both interesting and valuable.

Washburn has for a number of years had a paper that has done much for the town, as will be seen by the following. It has been at various time the property of a number of different owners.

S. C. Bruce began the publication of the Washburn News in 1877, but it was not continued long. In 1879, the Washburn Revelie was issued by the Sparland Chronicle, and at a later date the Woodford County Sentinel published a Washburn edition. In 1882 the Washburn Times was published by Matthiessen and Snow, and in 1890 the Washburn Leader was established, under the management of Wm. Rowley, later Rowley and Crane. J. H. Schultze and George Weinteer in turn owned the paper, and in 1905, it passed into the hands of its present owner, R. E. Patterson.

Eureka has had several newspapers, and various editors have from time to time sought to mold the opinions of the people. December 10th, 1867, John W. Karr issued the first

copy of the Woodford Journal. After several changes in ownership this paper passed into the hands of R. N. Radford and was operated by Mr. Radford and the firm of Radford and Davidson for many years. It is still in the hands of the Radford family, being owned by Dr. B. J. Radford and published by B. J. Radford, Jr. The name was changed to the Eureka Journal and continued as such until the consolidation of that paper with the Woodford County Democrat, a paper founded by J. D. Clark, and that later passed into the hands of J. A. Schaffer. It was then changed to the Democrat-Journal. In 1896, M. T. Hyer started the Woodford County Republican. This paper ultimately passed into the hands of P. E. Low who still publishes it. Another paper that had a brief, tho prosperous career in the city, was the Eureka Progress, published by J. P. Slyter. It was founded by F. M. Bolt, about 1888, and was owned at one time by Kenneth Coleson. The plant was finally removed to Deer Creek, where it is still published.

The publications of Minonk have undergone numerous changes. In the early seventies there were two papers. The Minonk Journal, published by G. H. Jenkins, and The Minonk Index, published by M. A. Cushing. Neither of these papers were continued long. In 1874, Irving Carrier began the publication of the Minonk Blade. At a later date J. M. Fort assumed control of the paper. The name of the publication was changed to The Minonk Register after Mr. Fort disposed of it, and was again changed by Mr. C. R. Denson, the present proprietor, to the Minonk Dispatch. In 1877 a second paper was established by S. C. Bruce who came there from Washburn. The new publication was known as the Minonk News and has been published under that name since its establishment, altho it has been owned by various parties. It is now owned and published by George Werkheiser.

The Benson Bee is a weekly publication edited by H. D. Lewis. In 1895, B. W. Kinsey began the publication of the Benson Post. In a short time he sold his interest to D. Davis,



INDUSTRIAL.



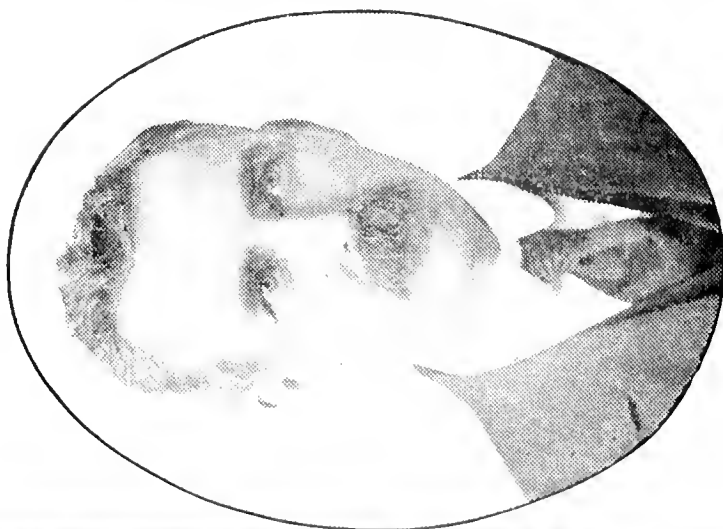
REV. D. M. FICKEN,  
Linn Township.



C. SCHAFER, ElPaso.



JACOB RAY, Eureka.



ISAAC B. HAMMERS.  
El Paso, Ill.



R. D. TOMB, Cruger Township.



JOSEPH VOGEL.  
Clayton Township.

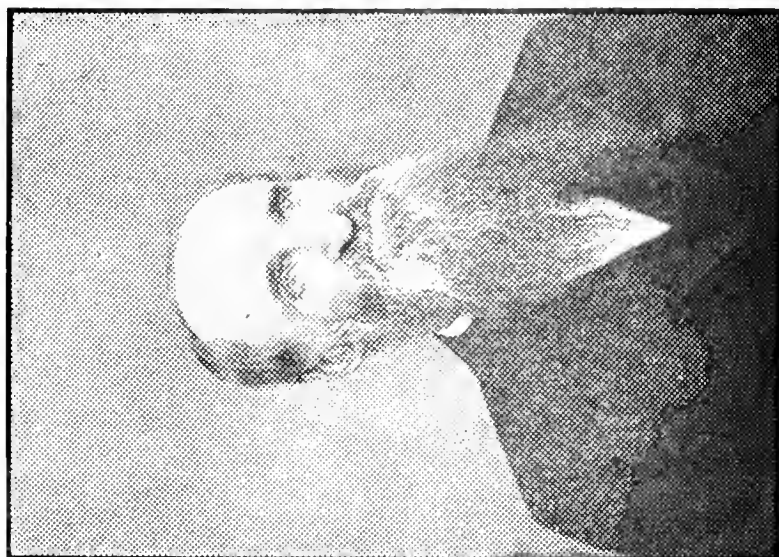
who later transferred the paper to Minonk. In 1899, H. D. Lewis came to Benson from Eureka and began the publication of the Bee, which he has continued to this time.

The first newspaper published in El Paso was The Gazette, a little 10x14 four page publication, founded by Robert Couch. The present owner of the Journal, Mr. George W. Curtiss has a copy of the first issue of that paper. Its publication was begun February 1st, 1863. In April, 1865, the El Paso Journal was launched. The question as to who established it is in dispute. The anniversary edition of the Journal, published February 6th, 1909, names John S. Harper as its founder. The History of '78 names John S. Harper and D. B. Fisk as its founders. Be that as it may the issue of November 8, 1865, bears the name J. W. Wolfe. The first few years of its existence recorded a number of changes in ownership. It passed thru many experiences, until in 1889, it came under the control of G. R. Curtiss and R. of the leading papers in Central Illinois. Mr. Curtiss has of the leading papers in Central Illinois. Mr. Curtiss has recently celebrated the twentieth anniversary of his control of the paper. It has been operated under the same name longer than any other paper in the county. There have been various other publications, but they have been of short duration. Among these was the Woodford County Republican that was first published there, but was later removed to Eureka by M. T. Hyer. Another was the Patriot published in the '60's by D. B. Fiske. The last publication was the El Paso Press published by Beard of Chenoa.

The Roanoke Call began the nineteenth year of its publication in July, of the present year. It was established by P. B. Hobbs, who still retains possession of it and it has enjoyed a healthy growth. Prior to the founding of the Call there had been a paper there known as the Roanoke Era. It was established at the time of the county seat contest in 1883, and when the election failed to remove the county seat its publication was abandoned.



SAMUEL PETERSON,  
Clayton Township.



D. P. KENYON, Minonk.



SEBASTIAN VOGEL, Greene Tp.

## MINING.

Woodford county also belongs to that part of Illinois that is underlain by rich deposits of coal, at varying depths, in veins of sufficient thickness to make mining a paying investment. The first mine sunk was at Minonk, in 1869. It was inaugurated by a stock company. The first board of directors consisted of Frank Burt, H. R. Kipp, M. L. Newell, J. D. Webber, H. C. Dent, Chas. Whittaker and Samuel Ewers. The mine was first sunk 329 feet, at which depth it was found that it could not be operated on a paying basis. The company was reorganized and the shaft was sunk to the depth of about 550 feet. It finally turned its interest over to Minor T. Ames, of Chicago, who operated it under the name of the Minonk and Chicago Coal and Coke Company, with great success for many years. Later a second shaft was sunk. The property is now in the possession of Mrs. Ames, but it is operated under a lease. For several years before passing into the possession of its present owners it was in litigation.

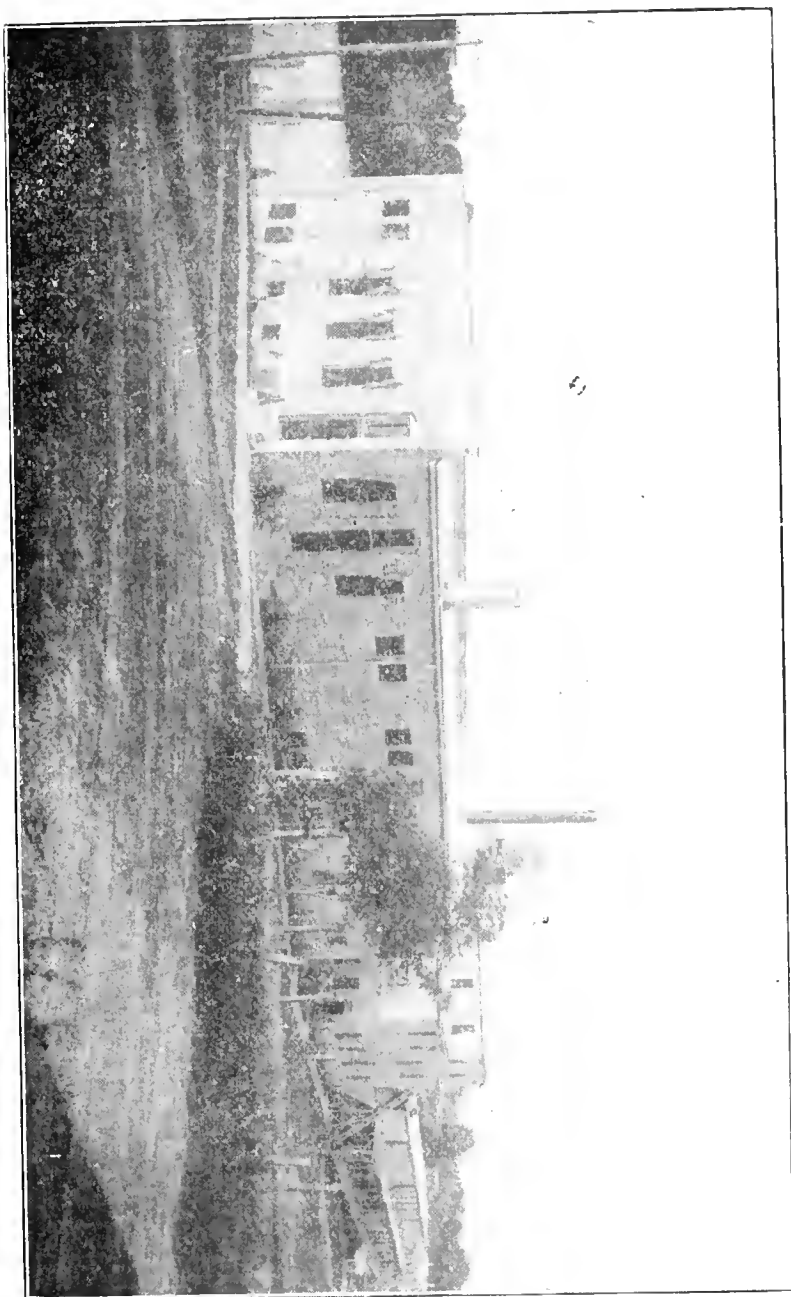
The second shaft in the county was sunk at Roanoke in 1881. A company was organized to sink it, in which Isaac Snyder, Peter Kennell, and Peter Belsley were the chief investors. A shaft was sunk in the east part of town to the depth of 480 feet. A vein of fine quality was reached at this depth. Two other veins had been reached before but these did not give promise of such rich returns, and were passed. The mine produces about 500 tons of coal per day and employs about three hundred men. In 1899 the property was sold to the Roanoke Coal Mining Company, and it is now owned and operated by Duggan Bros., under the above name.

A number of unsuccessful attempts have been made to sink mines at different points. Among these was the Panola mine, which was started forty years ago. The workmen reached a depth of seventy-five feet, but were unable to go on, altho the prospectings had shown coal in paying quantities.

An attempt was made a number of years ago to sink a coal shaft at Eureka. The company was organized in 1881, and several thousand dollars were raised for the work. Prospectors found a vein of coal at a depth of 205 feet. At the depth of 281 feet a thicker vein, and the best vein at the depth of 380 feet. The shaft was sunk to the depth of about 100 feet, when it became impossible to continue the work, and the shaft was abandoned.

An attempt was made a number of years ago to sink a shaft at Metamora. It was sunk to the depth of 130 feet and abandoned. At a little over fifty feet a seam of coal was found a foot thick and at a somewhat greater depth another thin vein, and finally a vein of three and half feet in thickness was struck, but only a small part of this was marketable.

One of the most extensive canning factories in Illinois is located at Eureka and is owned by Dickinson and Company. In 1895, a stock company was organized and capitalized at \$10,000, for the purpose of erecting a canning factory. A plant was put up east of town, and it was operated one year. The company lost heavily on the first season's pack, and the factory was idle until 1898, when R. B. Dickinson & Son purchased it and operated it with great success. The year following, the firm of Dickinson and Company erected their large plant where it now stands. Since the building of the original plant, thousands of dollars have been expended in improvements. The company cans peas, corn and pumpkins, and the season's pack exceeds three and half million cans. They raise a large part of their own products, but a portion of the corn is raised by farmers under contract. They employ 300 people during the busy season, and have 15 men employed by the year. Their stock is sold all over the United States, much of it being shipped to neighboring states. California receives a number of cars of their goods every year. In the fall of 1909 the company entered into an arrangement for a factory at Washington, similar to the



DICKINSON & CO.'S CANNING FACTORY, Eureka, Ill.

original plant, and it will be ready for the next season's pack. Of the members of the firm, R. J. Dickinson has charge of raising the products, while E. B. Dickinson has charge of the office work and the factory. The plant represents an investment of many thousands of dollars.

#### MINONK PRODUCE COMPANY.

Another important enterprise in the county is located at Minonk and is known as the Minonk Produce Company. In the spring of 1884 W. F. Priebe and F. J. Simater began business, buying and shipping poultry and eggs. They originated the idea of shipping poultry in the summer time, and shipped the very first barrel of ice packed poultry ever sent out. The business of shipping has increased until ice packed poultry is going into the eastern market in lots of 20 to 25 carloads per day, the chief points being Boston, New York, Buffalo, Baltimore, Philadelphia and other large cities. In 1897 the firm began to branch out and its growth has continued until they ship a million pounds of poultry a month, and handle 240,000 cases of eggs a year. They also handle a million pounds of butter annually. The branch houses are located in different points of Illinois, Iowa and Missouri. The business in Minonk is managed by F. J. Simater, and represents a large investment.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### Towns of the County.

**W**OODFORD county has no large center of population but it has a number of prosperous villages and small cities. These have been the centers in the historic drama that has been enacted since 1836, which date marks the founding of the first town. They have not, however, been universally prosperous; some have even passed out of existence.

Towns as well as nations rise and fall. Changing conditions take from them their promise of growth; they reach their zenith of greatness and decay. History records the names of many cities that once gave promise of greatness, but are now known only as its pages record them. Even in the brief period covered by the annals of Woodford county, towns have been founded, prospered for a time, decayed and have become a matter of history.

The present division will record in its due course the rise and fall of at least three of these erstwhile promising towns.

The year of 1836 was important in the history of the development of the county. In that year the first postoffice was established at Black Partridge. It also witnessed the platting of four towns, Bowling Green, March 7th, 1836; Spring Bay, April 2nd, 1836; Versailles, June 3rd, 1836; Metamora, June 7th, 1836.

#### Bowling Green.

Bowling Green, in the southwestern part of Palestine

township, was laid out March 7th, 1836, by Elbert Dickason, surveyor, for Francis M. Willis. The name has been corrupted in common practice from Bolling Green to its present form, Bowling Green. October 21, 1837, an addition was made to the town by Aaron Richardson. The name of Versailles is connected in the minds of pioneers with county seat hopes and disappointments while that of Bowling Green is coupled with the idea of business push and enterprise.

Among the first settlers in Panther Grove were Charles Josiah and Campbell Moore, who came in 1830. They set about constructing a mill, and soon had it ready for business. This was before the establishment of the town, and was the first water mill of which we have any record. In 1831 James and Aaron Richardson came to the vicinity and soon became the leading figures in the growth of the town. They came from New Albany, Indiana, and as was usually the case had little capital to start with. James M. Richardson had a horse, a one horse wagon, and thirty-seven cents in money when he came to Woodford county, yet within a few years he was one of the leading business men, not only in Bowling Green, but in the whole county.

In 1837 James M. and Aaron Richardson opened the first store, and for a number of years did an extensive business. This was the first store in the eastern part of the county. As in the case of Versailles, Bowling Green at that time belonged to McLean county, and any official business had to be transacted at the county seat in Bloomington. A little later James Robeson opened a store there and enjoyed quite a trade. The mill erected by the Moores was sold to Francis Willis, and about 1839 James and Aaron Richardson erected a second mill, one-half mile southeast of town. It was built on an extensive plan for those days and was known far and wide as the Bowling Green mill. A dam was constructed across the stream, and ample power was furnished for its operation. Many of the older settlers remember taking wheat or corn to this mill for grinding. A fixed toll was charged for such service and it was frequently paid in grain.

as money in those days was a scarce article. The volume of business transacted here was surprisingly large. Bowling Green was the only town except Versailles in the east side of the county, and the trade was drawn for many miles. Col. B. D. Meek is authority for the statement that the annual business of Bowling Green was at one time equal to that of Eureka at the present day.



**J. M. RICHARDSON.**

It was on the stage line between Peoria and Bloomington, and was the first stop east of Versailles. A post-office was established at an early date and was located in the store of Richardson Brothers. On the organization of the county in 1841, Joseph Moore, from the vicinity of Bowling Green was chosen as one of the three county commissioners. That office at the time was one of great importance as practical-

ly all the affairs of the county were in the hands of the commissioners. In the division of the county into voting precincts, one was designated Bowling Green precinct. In 1844 James Richardson was chosen county commissioner and held that responsible position six years. He was the father of W. R. Richardson, who resided in or near Secor for so many years. Aaron Richardson was the father of Dr. Frank Richardson, the noted Christian minister of Kansas City, Mo.

The establishment of towns, more favorably located than Bowling Green, led to its decay and the final abandonment of the place, yet it played an important part in the

business and political life of the county at an early day, and its citizens are worthy an important place in the annals of Woodford county.

### Spring Bay.

Within a few days of the establishment of Bowling Green, another town was laid out on the river in the western part of the county. The newly founded village was located so as to enjoy a center traffic. It was in what was at that time known as Tazewell county, and it was quite natural that the town should first be known as Tazewell. Later the name was changed to Spring Bay, because of the number of springs found in that region. The town was platted for James Day and Henry M. Mason, the plat bearing the date of April 2nd, 1841. The first store was conducted by a man named Rice. In 1843 Ira Y. Munn came to the village and opened a store which was conducted for several years under the firm name of Scott & Munn. In 1844 a postoffice was established at Spring Bay with C. S. Shultz as the first postmaster. Mail was then brought across the river from Peoria. Later mail was carried from Kappa, a number of towns being visited on the trip. In 1850 the first hotel was opened by David Couch, and in 1862, Joseph Hilenbrand built a saw mill that was later changed to a grist mill by William Burt.

One of the most extensive enterprises was the brewery owned by Peter Elshorn. This was quite an extensive plant for that time and employed a number of men. The investment in the enterprise has been estimated at \$25,000.

In 1849 a contract was entered into by the county with C. A. Gen. ways for the construction of a levee. This was later changed thru an agreement with Mr. Munn, so as to greatly enlarge the original plan of the work. It was ultimately completed at the cost of about \$4,000, the work being done by William Delph.

In 1849 the town of Spring Bay was incorporated, being the second town in the county to take this step. It has always maintained its organization. The officers at the

present time are: President, J. W. D. Anderson; trustees, John Winkler, Jr., Rudolph G. Jensen, O. A. S. Johnson, and Joseph Hodges; Treasurer, Ernest F. Erickson.

## Versailles

Among the famous towns of the former days was Versailles, mentioned prominently in the early papers. June 3rd, 1850, the village was platted by Dr. R. D. Bell and John P. Brady, in the S. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , S. 21, T. 2, and S. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Section 21, Township 2, Range 10, State of the Third Principal Meridian. The plat was made in the office of the Recorder at M. L. Campbell's. Versailles was at that time a part of the county. The principal streets were named North, East and West, while the intermediate streets were named Peach, Elm, Hickory, Walnut, Spruce, Walnut and Locust.

In 1848, Durand and his family moved to the first store. This was followed by the store built in 1841, and a prosperous community had been established. The town was progressive and its people were progressive. The movement

for the creation of a new county originated with the leading citizens of that vicinity. They saw in the plan an opportunity to make Versailles the seat of justice and a city of consequent importance. The news that a new county had been created, with Versailles named as its county seat for two years, caused great rejoicing in the town. From 1841 until 1843 the town was at the height of its prosperity. A stage line ran thru the village from Bloomington to Peoria. This brought attorneys and other visitors to the sessions of the court. A postoffice was established and the first postmaster was named King. He was succeeded by Ben Kelley. In 1843 the commissioners voted to locate the county seat at Hanover, and the hopes of the people of Versailles were blasted. The town never recovered from the effects of this disappointment. After the news of the decision of the commissioners was received, the people began to leave town and it soon lost its prestige. There were, however, evidences of its greatness for many years after the removal of the county seat. South of Versailles a saw mill was erected by John, Marion and Thomas Moore. It was later sold to Blaksley and Co., who owned a foundry at Metamora. The last store was owned by Ben Kelly, who was in business there for many years. This store, with a blacksmith shop, school and church, remained as relics of blasted hopes.

There were two churches at Versailles, the first established being the Church of Christ, the second the Methodist. The former was organized by James Robeson, W. C. Poynter and Amos Watkins, and for some time the school house was used as a place of worship. Later they erected a neat church, which served as a place of worship for many years. When the members of the congregation had become scattered and it was no longer possible to have services, the building was given to the Palestine church, and it was moved into that township. The M. E. church was erected at a much later date, Garland and David Moore taking a prominent part in its organization. A building was erected and services

were held for a number of years, but the congregation finally became scattered, and the church was moved into Palestine township near Panther Creek.

There are now but few evidences that the town of Versailles ever existed. All the buildings and stores have long since been removed or destroyed. Few remain who remember Versailles in its prosperous days, and these are aged men and women. The town site, however, remains platted as in early days, altho it is now farm property. This causes some annoyance in making out deeds or in clearing of titles, as the lands have been owned by so many different parties.

### **Metamora.**

Metamora has for many years played a prominent part in the civic life of the county. Her citizens have held prominent positions and it has been the center of numerous county movements. In 1836 the town of Hanover was surveyed. The name of the postoffice was Partridge Point, as there was another Hanover in the state. About 1845 the name of both the village and postoffice were changed to Metamora, the name being suggested by Mrs. Peter Willard.

The first house in the newly established town was built by John W. Page, and in a short time stores were opened. The first of these was by Wilson Tucker and the second was opened in a short time by Israel & Weeks. Later a store was opened that superseded both of the above and was on a much more substantial basis than those previously established. Both Mr. Parks and Mr. Willard, who had control of a store opened there in 1843, were practical business men and enjoyed an extensive trade. The latter bought grain and was a member of the firm of Scott & Munn of Spring Bay.

One of the first industries to be opened in that region, aside from the usual saw mill, was a foundry, established in 1851, by L. C. Blakesley & Co., but it was not operated many years, as it was not a paying investment.

In 1843 the seat of justice was removed from Versail-

les to Hanover, and in 1845, the court house was erected. The removal of the county seat gave a new impetus to the growth of the town.



**METAMORA HOUSE.**

In 1843 the Metamora House was erected, and still stands, altho it has been altered in appearance greatly since that time. In 1851 the jail was erected and served as a place for the retention of county prisoners for more than forty years.

The church history of Metamora has been fraught with many changes and much interest. In 1847 the Episcopalians erected the first church. The next was erected shortly afterward by the Congregationalists. In 1849 the Christian church was built.

The year following the Baptist society was organized and in 1854 their church was erected. The Methodist structure was built in 1855. These organizations have for several years been quite weak and union services have been held. A pastor is employed, regardless of his denomination.

The Catholic church was organized in 1863, by Rev. Father Derters, of the diocese of Chicago. In the beginning services were held in the court house. In 1864 the corner stone of their church was laid. The first structure was built of brick 50x30 feet. From 1864 to 1866 Redemptorist Fathers from Chicago visited the church once a month. In the latter year the congregation was given in charge of secular priests who attended it until 1877. On July 4th, of that year the Capuchin Fathers of Cumberland, Indiana, assumed charge of the congregation and Rev. Father Anthony was the first pastor, Washburn and Washington being mission points. In 1877 the building of a larger church was



begin. It was completed in May, 1878, the convent and church improvements costing \$10,600. The pipe organ cost \$1,100. In 1885 the spire was completed at the cost of \$1,895, and a fine chime of bells was installed. In 1878 Father Francis Xavier came to the church and remained until 1881, when Father Joseph Cal assumed charge of it. Father Joseph Anthony came in 1884, and remained until 1888, when Father Joseph Cal returned. In 1894 the Franciscan Fathers of Cincinnati, accepted the place and Father Edmund Klein was sent there. He was succeeded by Father Leopold Osterman, who was in turn followed by Father Eugene Buttermann. In 1900 Father Eugene was succeeded by Father Otto Zeigler, the pastor at present. The church property is valued at more than \$25,000.

St. Mary's Orphanage is the greatest institution of its kind in this part of the state. It was established in 1880 as near as can be ascertained. The Sisters of St. Francis, of St. Francis Hospital, Peoria, first had the work. Later the Sisters of St. Francis of St. Joseph's Home for the Aged, of Peoria, assumed control and have had charge for twenty years. The Bishop of the diocese has oversight of the institution. The Home had but fourteen inmates in 1880, now it has 72 children. They are cared for by seven sisters, at the head of whom is Sister Teresa, sister superior. A magnificent addition has recently been completed at the cost of \$20,000, and the home is now splendidly equipped. They have their own water, gas and steam plants. The home has a well arranged school room in connection with it. St. Mary's school is the parochial institution of the church. They have a separate, well-equipped building and a large enrollment of pupils.

The first school house in Metamora was built about the time of the erection of the court house. It served the purpose until 1850, when a new brick structure was erected. Prior to the time of the building of these, instruction was given in private houses, and for a number of years this was all the

schooling received by the children of the pioneers. The building of 1850 was destroyed by fire, and in 1873, a new brick edifice was erected that has served as a school house since that time. Recently the district has been enlarged to take in two outlying districts.

In January, 1859, it was incorporated, and the following officers were chosen: President, Samuel J. Cross; clerk, Edgar Babcock; trustees, James Whitmire, William Lamson, F. F. Briggs, and H. L. S. Haskell; justice of the peace, Elijah Plank. In 1875 it was organized under the general law as a village. The following officers were then elected: A. H. Kinnear, N. Portman, Garmon Gish, J. B. Knoblauch, F. F. Hirsch, and A. E. Nesmith, trustees.

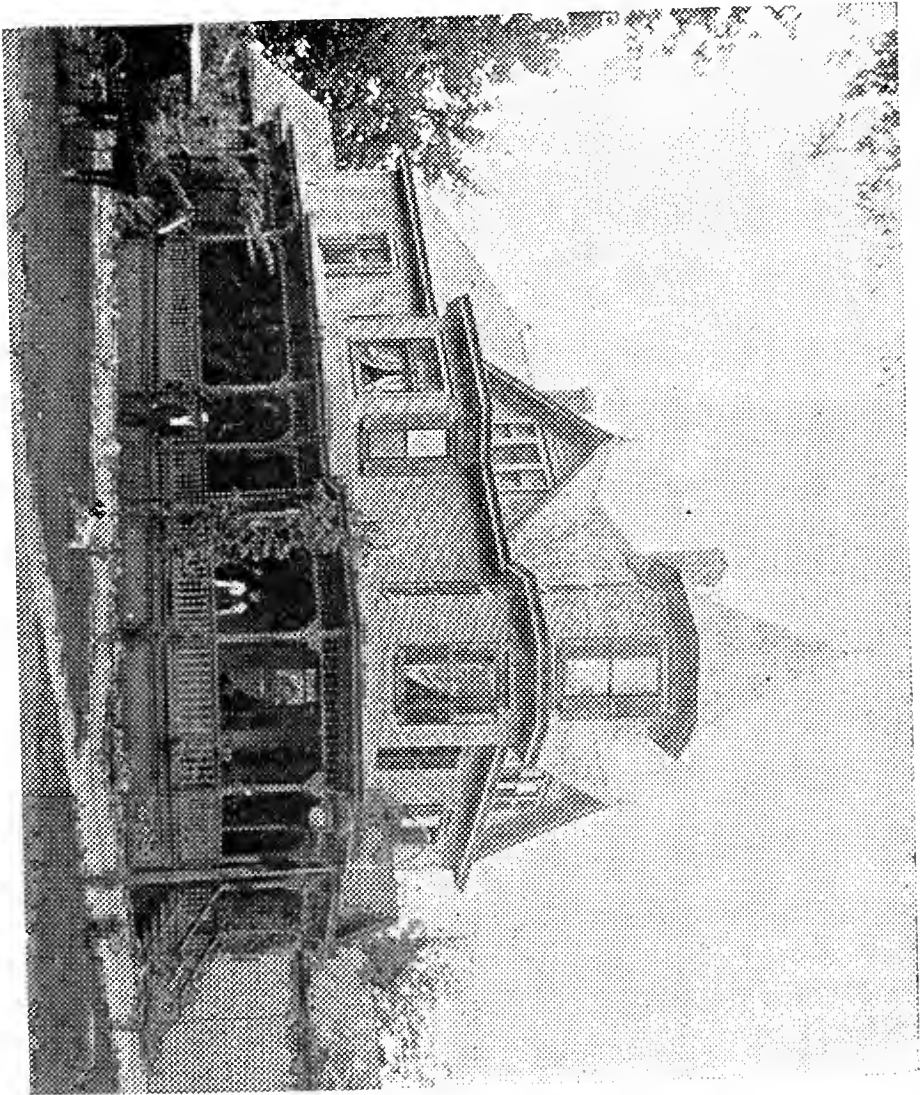
No town in the county has ever been connected with so many men of state and national reputation as Metamora. The old court house has been the scene of trials in which men, who have since moulded the affairs of the nation, were interested as attorneys. The immortal Lincoln was a familiar figure on the streets of Metamora. Mrs. T. B. Spears, whose husband was proprietor of the Metamora House, remembers distinctly the visits of Mr. Lincoln to the town. She also remembers Mr. Douglas in his visits there. Robert G. Ingersoll was another of the early visitors at the sessions of court. He was at that time practicing at Peoria. Adlai Stevenson for many years practiced law in the Woodford county courts. A host of other prominent figures in the political arena were frequent visitors in the county seat.

In 1894 the election was held that resulted in the removal of the court house to Eureka. Metamora has not, however, suffered greatly from its removal. There is a greater spirit of enterprise evident among the business men than before, and it has improved greatly during the past few years.

One of its more recent enterprises is the creamery, owned by a stock company composed largely of farmers. Since its organization it has been a paying investment. Thousands of pounds of high grade creamery butter are turned out

every month, and it commands the highest price. Another important enterprise was the corn dump factory owned by Camp Bros. The firm recently moved its headquarters to Washington.

J. C. IRVING'S RESIDENCE.



The old court house is now the property of the village, and it is used as a place of public meeting. Altho it is no longer the scene of important action as heretofore, it is still a center of historic interest. The long series of years of service has made it an important place because of the memory of what it has been. The village is at present controlled by the following officers: President, Frank Giehl;

trustees, Joseph W. Meek, J. C. Snyder, Joseph Gulder, Joseph Getz, John Schrepfer, Henry Lanzenberger; clerk, J. W. Frantz; police magistrate, A. J. Martin; treasurer, Ed. W. Knoblauch.

The village has a well equipped telephone exchange. It has a large patronage both in town and in the surrounding country.

No history of Metamora would be complete without a reference to John L. McGuire, who for many years has been its leading citizen. He was born in Ireland, in 1844, and came to America when 9 years of age. In 1858 he settled in Metamora and has continued to claim that as his residence



**J. C. IRVING.**

since that time. In 1862 he enlisted in the 51st Illinois Infantry and served until the close of the war. In 1870, he married Miss Della Page, whose death occurred a few years ago. He has been prominently connected with the political affairs of the county, and represented this district in the legislature two terms, being elected in 1894 and 1896.

J. C. Irving is another prominent character in Metamora. His father, David Irving, was born in Somerset county, New Jersey. In 1844 he moved to Woodford county and was awarded the contract for building the court house at that place. J. C. Irving was born in Metamora in 1850. He was a student in Eureka College and after leaving school was connected with the Sentinel for some time. He served eight years as deputy circuit clerk and in 1888 was elected to that responsible office. He has held numerous positions of trust in the city of which he is a resident.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### Slabtown and Farniville.

THE name Slabtown is familiar to almost every boy or girl in the county, yet few of them know that it was once a busy village with bright prospects of future greatness. It was located on the banks of the Mackinaw river in Montgomery township, near the present site of Mackinaw Dells. In 1835 a saw mill was built by Joseph Gingerich and Peter Farni. It was not until fifteen years afterwards that a store was opened by Isaac Evans. He kept a stock of groceries and general merchandise. It was from a little store building that the town derived its name. The owner, Isaac Evans, had built his structure of slabs from the mill, hence the name. This store changed hands frequently, passing first into the hands of Fred Niergarth. Finally after numerous changes it became the property of Minor Bros. This firm owned a well equipped grist mill on the banks of the Mackinaw river and did a thriving business. The mill was equipped with three buhrs. The firm was composed of three brothers, John, James and William. The former afterward went to Peoria and became deputy sheriff of that county.

Joseph Klopfenstein opened a butcher shop there in 1858 and also had a grocery in connection with it. He came to Eureka twice a week, and supplied that vicinity with meat. It appears strange to the reader of the present day that Eureka should have at one time depended on the meat market of Slabtown for its meat. He was frequently able to supply his customers with venison that Samuel Finley had secured for him. Mr. Klopfenstein made this trip for two years.

Carlson and Siebens conducted a brewery, and were also at one time owners of the general store there. The chief industry of the place, however, was a large distillery owned and operated by two Frenchmen from St. Louis named Bouteham and Cari. The plant cost about \$30,000, and when in full operation employed about 50 men. The distillery was erected in 1847. After the railroad was completed thru Eureka, they sent most of their products to Eureka or Cruger for shipment by rail. R. N. Radford, who was connected with the postoffice at Eureka, at the time the firm was doing business at Slabtown, states that he collected as much as five dollars a week postage from this firm on mail received by them. The owners of the plant lacked capital for the conducting of such extensive business, and did not meet with success. In 1859 the distillery was destroyed by fire and never rebuilt. Christian Farni, a wealthy farmer who had unbounded confidence in the members of the firm, lost heavily as a result of their failure. He had sold the entire products of his farm to the firm and was also security for them. His loss amounted to \$34,000. His brother, Peter Farni, also lost heavily, but not nearly so much as Christian. There were others who suffered losses, but these were the principal parties. The distillery had been well equipped, having in connection with it a grist mill for grinding their own grain.

Slabtown enjoyed a flourishing trade, and seemed destined to make a town of considerable size, but railroads passing thru other parts of the county, opening them to direct connections with the outside world by rail, sounded the death knell to every hope of the little village.

Across the river from Slabtown was Farniville, named in honor of Mr. Farni, on whose land it was located. The name has since become Fannyville, thru common use. There was for many years a store there, conducted by Adolph Habeek. After closing his store he went to Roanoke, where

his death occurred several years ago. Jacob Hoyer also conducted a boarding house there. No sign of their former business activities is to be seen at either Slabtown or Farniville. The former population has been scattered and many of its older citizens have passed to their reward. At the latter point there still stands an Amish church, built in 1874, which has served as a place of worship since that time. There was at one time a postoffice at Farniville, but it only continued a short time.

John Finley, now a resident of Eureka, tells an interesting story in connection with Slabtown, that will throw some light on conditions at that time. He and Mrs. Finley had taken a lot of eggs to Eureka, but there was no market for them and they had to carry them back home again. The next day she took them to Slabtown and there received three cents a dozen for them, and took in exchange cotton at five cents a pound. Within three weeks from that time cotton was worth eighty-five cents a pound, due to the increase in price caused by the war in the south.

### **Washburn.**

Before the construction of the Chicago and Alton railroad, steps had been taken for the establishment of a town near the present site of Washburn. The first postoffice was across the line in Marshall county, and was about a quarter of a mile north of Washburn as it now exists. The first postmaster was William Maxwell. As will be seen from this statement, the early beginnings of the town were in Marshall county. The village at that time gave little indication of becoming the beautiful little city it has since become. The first store was opened by Americus Pogue, whose name figures also among the first business men of Minonk. This store was first opened across the street from the southwest corner of the school house lot.

The town was laid out in 1853 by Hiram Echols and was near the county line. The founder, being anxious to see

the newly established town prosper, offered to donate a site to the first organization that would put up a church. In 1852 Rev. Freeman had organized a Baptist church, and this society took advantage of the offer made by Mr. Echols and received the free site for their building, which was erected in 1855-56, under the leadership of Rev. C. D. Merit, its pastor. This church served the purpose of a meeting place for this congregation for many years. Owing to the removal of many members of the congregation services were finally abandoned and the building was sold to the German Lutheran church. It is now used as a place of meeting by that congregation.

The first store building erected in the town was built by Jesse Hammers, whose name we find connected with the history of Cazenovia. The first residence was erected by Dr. Thomas. The question of a name for the new town caused considerable discussion. The name Mantua was suggested but it was found that there was already a town in the state bearing that name. It bore the name of Uniontown for a time, this being considered appropriate as the town was in two counties, and the interests of the two were thus united. This name was abandoned, however, and that of Washburn ultimately adopted.

Among the men who have long been connected with the business interests of the town may be mentioned Frank N. Ireland, of the Ireland Bank. Christian Haase also entered business there in 1868. He was a member of the legislature in the 42nd and 45th General Assemblies. Fred Ehringer opened a furniture store there in the early days of Washburn. It is still owned by members of the Ehringer family. John Immel came there in 1866 and has been doing blacksmith work there since then.

The Ehringer Produce Company does an extensive business. A creamery was started there a few years ago, but failed to be a paying investment and was abandoned. In 1901 a telephone exchange was organized, and it was oper-



ated by O. E. Shepard until 1909, when C. A. Fitschen took a half interest in the system, and the entire plan of work is being reorganized. They have 165 telephones in town and 125 in the country. Two years ago the Consolidated Electric Light and Manufacturing company put in a system of electric lights.

The religious interests are cared for by six churches. The Methodist church was organized in 1857 but did not have a church building until 1863. This structure was destroyed by fire and the present modern church was erected in 1906. The German Evangelical church was organized in 1877, and the Christian church was erected in 1867. The Presbyterian church was also one of the early churches of the town. The Catholic church has been more recently organized and ministers to the spiritual needs of about twenty families. The Lutherans occupy the building they purchased from the Baptist congregation.

Washburn has suffered seriously from fire. In 1887 two blocks were destroyed by fire, and December 23, 1904, a second fire visited the town destroying a block of store buildings. A third fire occurred in 1909 in which the opera house, one of the best in Central Illinois, was destroyed together with several other pieces of valuable property. The opera house would seat 700 people and the loss probably exceeded \$10,000.

A city hall has been built and is used by both city and township, and is a convenient place for public meetings. One of the largest stores in the city is that of A. C. Martini which was erected nine years ago. Two of the most extensive contracting firms in the county are located in Washburn, and do work in many surrounding townships. Henry Lesch and Fitschen Bros., each employ a large force of workmen and are widely known.

The village was organized in July, 1873, and the first officers were as follows: President, S. W. McCulloch; clerk,

M. S. Fulton; treasurer, F. N. Ireland; street commissioner, William Cotton; constable, R. H. Richards; trustees, Geo. C. Butler, F. Bennecke, Samuel Patrick, Henry Sangbush, J. G. Harris.

The Washburn school is located across the line in Marshall county, but its attendance is largely made up of Woodford county children. The school furnishes an excellent course of study and has a large attendance.

The city is governed by the following officers: President, F. A. Ehringer; trustees, James Sharp, George Garrison, George M. Butler, John Mason, Ed. Harper, Henry Sangbush; clerk, Emil Baumgart; police magistrate, Richard Gill.

### **ElPaso.**

The city of ElPaso, which is one of the most beautiful in Woodford county, is located at the junction of the Toledo, Peoria and Western and Illinois Central railroads. It is justly famed for its business enterprise, as well as for its high moral and intellectual standards. It is a city of churches, and these organizations have given the town the high moral standard it possesses.

ElPaso was laid out April 20, 1854, by James H. Wathan and George L. Gibson, who were owners of the land. Since that time a number of additions have been made to the original town. As was the case with so many of the towns it was first organized under a special charter.

The first place of business was opened by William and Isaac Jenkins, who were connected with the business life of ElPaso for many years. This firm kept a general store and also dealt in grain.

In 1857 the postoffice was established and Mr. Jenkins was the first postmaster.

The town grew quite rapidly after it became the junction of the Illinois Central and T. P. & W. railroads. Busi-

ness was drawn from all directions and it was in a short time a town of much importance. Among the early settlers we find the names of James H. Wathan, George L. Gibson, William R. Willis, Christian Schafer, George H. Campbell, Wm. H. McClellan and Thomas McClellan. Early business men were Graft & Webster, R. A. McClellan & Co., Alex Hawthorne, grain dealers; S. T. Rogers, druggist; Crawford and Bartlett, furniture and undertaking.

ElPaso has always sought to maintain a high intellectual standard. One of the institutions in which ElPaso takes great pride is its library. As early as 1873 an organization was formed known as the Ladies' Library Association. The first officers were: President, Mrs. Dr. Stockwell; secretary, Mrs. Delos O'Brian; treasurer, Mrs. W. R. Bingham; librarian, Mrs. S. H. Worthington. At the time the fire occurred in 1894, there were 2,009 volumes in the library, all of which were destroyed. With the insurance money received, 500 books were purchased, and new quarters were opened. The institution prospered, and in 1906 a handsome library building was erected in the west park, the funds being donated by Andrew Carnegie. It is now controlled by the following library board: President, F. B. Stitt; vice-president, Miss Nell Patterson; secretary, J. F. Sturgeon; treasurer, Peter Thometz; librarian, Mrs. J. S. Tucker; J. S. Welch, F. S. Larison, P. G. Haas, Robert Nethercott, Miss Sarah Gough and A. B. Turner.

From its earliest history ElPaso has had excellent educational facilities. The first school building was erected in 1857, but prior to that there had been a school taught at the home of E. H. King. In 1859, a new district was formed, the Illinois Central being the dividing line, and a two room school was built. In 1869 the new three story brick school house was erected, and it is still in use. This is now known as the McKinley school. The west side was for many years furnished with a frame building, but in 1897 the Jefferson

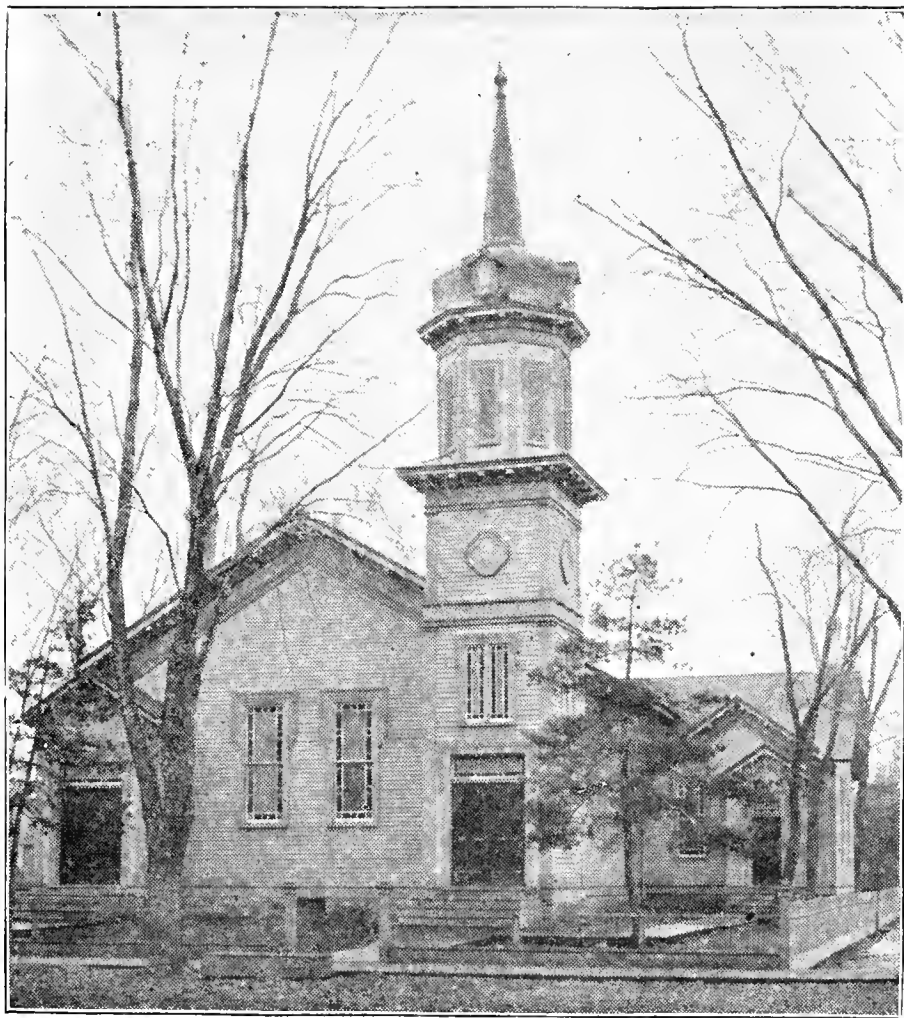
Park school was erected. This is a large, convenient brick building that is a credit to the district.



**M. E. CHURCH, EL PASO, ILLINOIS.**

El Paso is a city of churches. Eight separate organizations have structures in the town, some of them both modern and handsome. The first church was established in 1857, by

the Presbyterians, under Rev. W. T. Adams. In 1864 the church was erected at a cost of \$3,200. This served as a place of worship until 1903, when the present beautiful structure was built. About the time of the organization of this church, a Methodist Episcopal class was formed with Rumsey Smitherson, as pastor. Their church was erected in 1864. It was



**BAPTIST CHURCH, EL PASO, ILLINOIS.**

torn down in 1894 and a new building was erected in its place. This was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1895.

The Baptist church was organized in 1858, under the administration of Rev. Wm. Branch. Their church was also

erected in 1864. This has since served the congregation as a place of worship.

The St. Mary's Catholic church was organized in 1863, and their first church was finished in 1865. The present handsome edifice was erected in 1898.

In 1864 the Christian church was organized under the leadership of Elder John Lindsey and in 1865 their church was built. In 1863 the German Lutheran church was erected. The English Evangelical church was an offshoot of the



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, EL PASO, ILLINOIS.**

German Evangelical society that once had a flourishing organization there, but that has since gone down.

The Campbell House which is still a prominent feature in the life of El Paso, was built in 1863. The opera house was built in 1895. The upper story is owned by the Masonic Fraternity while the lower story is owned by a stock company, in which the controlling interest is held by A. E.

Fleming. In 1907 a city hall was erected. The corner stone of which bears the names of the city officers: Mayor, Peter Donner; committee, O. North, J. S. Welch, W. J. Render, S. W. Nevil, W. M. Kridner, E. Shreve; city clerk, H. J. Tegtmeyer; treasurer, O. M. Parmelee; city attorney, Horace Baker; architect, G. H. Miller, contractor, J. A. Reichel.

FIRST NATIONAL BUILDING, EL PASO, ILL.



One of El Paso's most attractive places is the green house owned by the El Paso Carnation company, with C. J.

Snyder, manager. The company has 25,000 square feet of glass, and it has thousands of plants in cultivation.

The Catholic cemetery is located north of the city. The city cemetery is just east of town. In 1908 a handsome mausoleum was erected. It is the only one in the county, and has 200 crypts. These are arranged on each side of a driveway thru the structure. It is handsomely finished, and is made of concrete blocks, so interwoven with steel rods as to make it indestructible.

El Paso has suffered seriously from fire at different times. Each of the three blocks has had most of its buildings de-



**EAGLE BLOCK, EL PASO, ILL.**

Erected 1871-'72; destroyed by fire July 19, 1894.

stroyed, but these have been replaced by modern structures. October 10th, 1882, the south half of Block 43, East Front street was destroyed by fire, the blaze starting in the old El Paso House. May 8th, 1889, the Illinois Central coal sheds were destroyed, entailing a loss of \$20,000. August 15th, 1893, the west end of Block 41, West Front street suffered, the loss being \$12,500. But the greatest disaster of all was the destruction of the center of block 42, on Front street in 1894, where the fire raged for three hours, and \$250,000 worth of property was destroyed. After each of



these ElPaso recovered from its losses and entered into the work of rebuilding with greater earnestness.

ElPaso was incorporated as a city in February, 1867, and the following officers were chosen: Mayor, J. H. Moore; clerk, John T. Harper; aldermen, William Neifing, D. B. Webster, M. T. Polhemus, George W. Fridley and W. T. Adams. The city was incorporated under the general law April 6th, 1891. It was then divided into three wards, there having been two prior to that time. The following were the officers chosen at the election following the re-organization: Mayor, Walter S. Gibson, the position being later filled by S. M. Ferrell; aldermen, Edwin Hodgson, L. M. Kerr, J. A. Smith, R. G. Hebden, Ozias Johns, Adam Brown; clerk, S. K. Hayward, attorney, Walter Bennett; treasurer, James Thompson; supervisor, Gustave Anthenat; marshals, Henry J. Morris, George W. Tegard; police magistrate, J. H. Moore.

The city is now governed by the following officers: Mayor, Peter Donner; clerk, John W. Becker; treasurer, Peter Thometz; attorney, C. G. Schroeder; city collector, R. W. Gough; superintendent of streets, James Fitzgerald; city marshal, L. F. Tobias; night police, O. Johns; police magistrate, O. J. Lemon; aldermen, Omer North, Elmer Shreve, J. S. Welch, George Stambach, William J. Render, William Tegard.

The ElPaso Fair is one of the most important organizations in the county. In 1879 the Woodford County Grange held a small but successful fair on Mr. Strickland's farm just north of the city. In 1880 the Fair Association was incorporated. The officers of the Grange Fair were: M. H. Wart, president; F. F. Waite, secretary; P. S. Bassett, vice-president; J. M. Stonbraker, treasurer. Edwin Hodgson was chosen the first president of the new organization. The fair grounds are just north of the city, and several substantial buildings have been erected. The annual fair is largely attended. The following are officers: President, E. A. Childs; treasurer, A. H. Waite; vice-president, J. L. McOmber; sec-

retary, H. J. Tegtmeyer; directors, W. H. Kingdon, S. C. Baringer, Frank E. Lewis, James Wilkey, J. F. Shepard, J. A. Gilbert, George H. Scheer, A. E. Fleming, G. R. Curtis, John H. Roth, John Pleasants, S. W. Stingeon and F. B. Koerner.

In 1882 a system of water works was put in at the cost of \$5,000. This was greatly improved in 1894. The city also has electric lights and during the past three years some paving has been done on the main street.

The city has an extensive telephone system controlled by a stock company. The following are officers: President, and manager, R. E. Gordon; vice-president, F. B. Stitt; secretary and treasurer, L. K. Evans; directors, F. B. Schafer and M. A. Adams.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### Minonk.

THE introduction of railroads within the borders of the county was the signal for the inauguration of great changes. Regions that before were unsettled became the scene of vigorous life and activity. Where before there had been a wilderness there sprang up, as if by magic, towns that opened to the people the markets of the world. Prairies that prior to the construction of the railroads had been a vast expanse of virgin soil soon became the home of the sturdy pioneers, bringing under cultivation the lands about them, and dotting the landscape with their cabins. The region discussed in this chapter was largely settled after the introduction of railroads. It consisted principally of prairie lands, and was consequently of later settlement than the timber regions.

In 1852 and '53 the Illinois Central railroad was constructed and in 1854 -trains began to run thru Minonk township. Prior to this the territory on both sides of the track was unsettled. The settlement of the township and town were coincident, Samuel Werk, being the first actual settler. He had come from Pennsylvania to Illinois quite early but did not come to Minonk until 1854. It will thus be seen that the county had existed a number of years before Minonk was founded. In spite of this, however, it is the most populous city of the county. There is doubt as to the origin of the name, altho the general supposition is that the name is of Indian origin.

When the railroad went thru and established a station there, Samuel Werk became the first station agent. Charles

Dobson and C. W. Goodrich came the same year, 1854, and the former soon entered into business. He opened a grocery store, and associated with him Americus Pogue, whose name occupies an important place as one of the first business men of Washburn also. They had a stock of the more staple articles in groceries. Mr. Dobson was also interested in other lines, being associated with Mr. Werk in the purchase of grain for a short time. In December, 1854, a postoffice was established, with Charles Dobson as first postmaster. In 1855 C. W. Goodrich and James Parker entered the lumber and grain business. The first residence in town was erected by Mr. Dobson and the second by Mr. Goodrich. At that time the town had two houses and two railroad shanties, with about twenty inhabitants, half of whom were railroad men. The nearest house was that of James Livingston, seven miles west in Clayton township. The town, however, soon began to attract settlers. The thot of a convenient railroad thru the village led to the settlement of the country around the village. The first farm was opened by Samuel Wiley, who came from Vermont.

A hotel was opened at an early day in the history of the town by Jonathan Macey from Indiana. This was frequently used by the settlers as a place for holding religious services. Among other early settlers were Dr. Isaac Garrison, the first physician; L. G. Keedy, who became prominent as a captain in the civil war, and Thornton Taylor, who came from the western part of Woodford county.

D. P. Kenyon, one of the pioneers of Minonk, was born in Rensselaer county, New York, June 25, 1822, and came to Illinois in 1855. Two years later he came to Minonk, where he still resides.

The village was surveyed and platted for David A. Neal, of Salem, Mass., in October, 1854, the territory embraced extending 780 feet on each side of the Illinois Central and 3,690 feet north and south. As the town grew the need of more perfect government was felt and on September

17, 1864, it was decided to incorporate as a village. The first election of village officers occurred September 30th, the board of trustees being composed as follows: Reuben P. Bell, A. Cholwell, C. W. Goodrich, Henry C. Dent and M. A. Cushing. The board organized October 30th by choosing Reuben P. Bell as president and Henry C. Dent as clerk. The rapid growth of the village made it advisable to incorporate as a city, and steps were taken toward that end. March 7, 1867, the city of Minonk was incorporated, the following being the list of the first city officers: Mayor, John Stoner; clerk, M. L. Newell; aldermen, Samuel Work, H. R. Kipp, John Sparks and Henry C. Dent, one alderman being chosen from each of the four wards. September 20th, 1872, the city was incorporated under the general law.

In 1856 the first school was established, the settlers being firm in their belief that education is one of the essential elements in a well governed community. A temporary building west of the Woodford House was used as a school house. Francis Reeder was the first teacher. A year later a new building was erected at the cost of three hundred dollars, which served as a school house for several years. In 1864 a large frame building was built, the first principal being John Peck. In 1902 the present splendid structure was completed at the cost of more than \$30,000. It is the best equipped school in the county, having a manual training department, well arranged laboratories, and a fine library. Thru gifts, one in memory of Donald Austin Stoddard, who lost his life in the Iroquois theatre fire, and another thru the will of the late Mrs. Louisa M. Parks, the library has been greatly enlarged until in 1908 it contained 1,211 volumes. The building on the west side is also used for some of the lower grades. The first teacher received \$79 for four months school; the present salary of the superintendent is \$1,350 per annum. For several years the schools have been under the management of Prof. Wm. Hawkes.

Side by side with its intellectual development has gone

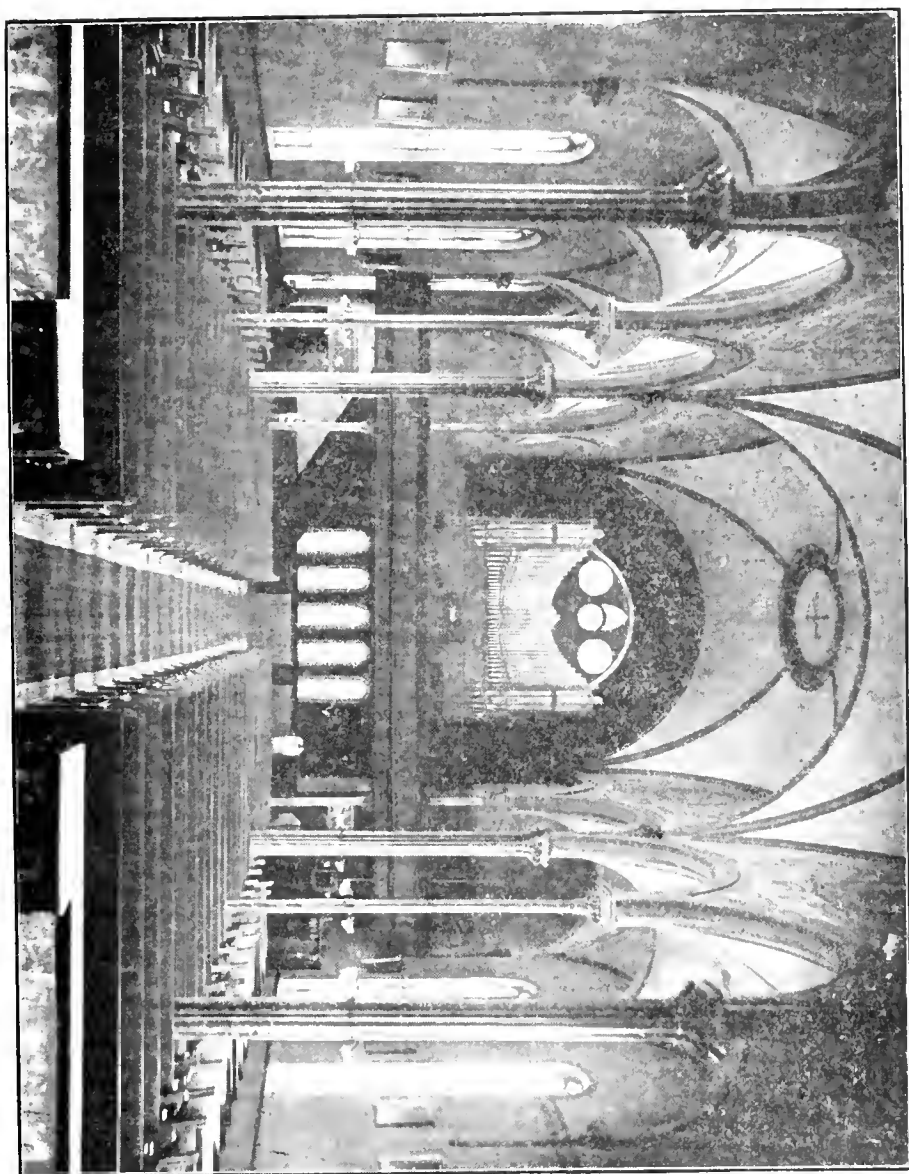
its spiritual growth. The Presbyterian was the first church organized in Minonk, the first preaching being done in the hotel in 1856. The following year the First Presbyterian church was formed. For a few months the newly formed society worshipped in the school house. In 1858 a modest little church was erected as a meeting place, which served that purpose until 1867, when a larger building was completed. The Methodists began to hold services in 1857, and soon had a flourishing society. In 1866 they built their church, which was superseded by a more modern structure in 1900.

The third church to organize was the Baptist, which was formed in 1858. Their meeting for considering articles of faith was attended by Rev. Baily, of Metamora; Rev. Ketchum, of Panola; Rev. C. D. Merit, of Washburn, and Rev. Fuller, of Richland. In 1859 Benj. Hall was elected clerk, and was instructed to raise eleven dollars with which to purchase a lot for a church building. This serves to indicate the value of lots at that time. Their new church was not dedicated, however, until October 30th, 1864. The cost, including the furnishings and organ was \$3,691.27. This provided a very comfortable meeting place for many years. During the war the members of this as well as of other churches kept up a correspondence with those from their congregation who were in the field. The will of the late Mrs. L. M. Parks, who died in December, 1902, left \$2,000, as the foundation for a fund to erect a new church. The corner stone of this new structure was laid in November, 1907, but it was not dedicated until 1908.

No other churches were founded in Minonk until 1865, when two were organized, the Catholic and Christian. The latter was without a church home until 1867, when a neat, convenient building was erected, which with various changes has served the purpose of the congregation to the present time. The Catholics at once built a structure that served

admirably as a place of worship until 1892, when the present magnificent structure was erected. The church is one of the strongest organizations in the county. It sustains a well

INTERIOR OF MINONK CATHOLIC CHURCH.



equipped parochial school. In 1905 St. Patrick's school was erected near St. Patrick's church. This is a large, brick structure, well equipped for school work. The cost of the building was in the neighborhood of \$15,000.

The Polish inhabitants of the city have in recent years organized a Catholic church, and it is in a flourishing condition.

In 1868 a Lutheran church was organized, which had a strong society, and the German Evangelical, known as the St. Paul church, was organized in the city and still exists. In 1870 the German Baptist church was organized. In the summer of 1856, A. H. Danforth, assisted by Samuel Work, Mr. Reeder and others organized a Sunday school, which was held first in the railroad station and was afterward removed to the Presbyterian church. Mr. Danforth was the first superintendent.



**CITY HALL, MINONK.**

Minonk has three railroads, the main line of the Illinois Central, constructed in 1852-'53, the Pekin branch of the Santa Fe constructed in 1875, and the Middle division of the Central built in 1873. These have made it an excellent commercial point and its business men have prospered.

In 1890 the Minonk Electric Light and Power Company was organized and a good system of electric lights was installed, under the management of Josiah Kerrick. There is also an excellent system of water works in operation. Since 1904 the streets have been greatly improved by paving, the improvements thus far being confined to the business streets.

The city is controlled by the following officers: Mayor, A. B. Kipp; aldermen, Nick Kruse, H. D. Fuller, Stock Ingerski, E. Schroeder, Herman Kelm and C. E. Ridge; clerk, C.



R. Denson; treasurer, A. J. Henning; attorney, J. A. Riley; fire marshal, W. H. Ryan; marshal, J. L. Welch; night police, H. H. Green; superintendent of water works, W. E. Minshall; police magistrate, Harm McChesney.

In 1904 a substantial city hall was erected, the corner stone of which bears the names of the following city officers: Mayor, H. B. Meils; aldermen, W. H. Ryan, F. M. Kerrigan, Kruse, Stoneman, Bonk, Davison and Clark.

### **Benson.**

There is but one village in Clayton township. In 1872 the Chicago, Pekin and Southwestern railroad was built thru the township, and Benson was founded upon the completion of the road. It was located in the midst of a wide territory of rich farming land, and it soon became a good grain point. The town was named in honor of S. H. Benson, of Streator, who was general freight agent at the time of its establishment. It was located on property owned by John Weast, and was surveyed February 20, 1873. A year later an addition was laid out known as Weast's addition to Benson. The township had been settled almost twenty years before the founding of the town and consequently there were farm houses not far from it. The house now owned by Mrs. Moritz was a farm house located on the site of Benson. The first house brought into the town was moved from the country by O. A. Cavan and was used as a hotel. The first house erected was built by F. D. Learned, who came from the farm to locate in town. Soon stores were put up and the business life of Benson began to show evidence of a healthy growth.

The first store was opened by Jurgens Harms and George Kirtchner in 1873. The firm kept a general stock of merchandise. Shortly afterward F. D. Learned opened a drug store. Strawn and Rannie erected a building on the corner of Front and Clayton streets and conducted a general store. The first station agent was Lyman Ballou, who was succeeded by Dan Davis. In March, 1873, the first mail was received in Benson, F. D. Learned having been appointed

first postmaster. The office was connected with the drug store.

In 1874 Joseph Benkler opened a harness shop, and the same year, Abrahams and Zinser opened a hardware store. The first physician was Dr. Slemmons and he was followed by Dr. Austman.



**DAN DAVIS.**

Jurgen Harms and Henry Heineke. Soon after this Chark Memmen and Henry Heineke opened a brick yard and tile factory. The next year it was purchased by Simon Peterson, who has operated and controlled it since that time.

In 1902 a telephone exchange was established, a stock company being organized with a capital stock of \$2,500. The officers are as follows: President, Jacob Roth; secretary, R. H. Parks; treasurer, S. L. Peterson. The exchange has 300 phones in operation.

The religious interests of Benson are well cared for. In 1873 the Catholic church was started by Rev. Father Marger, of Lourds. The land for the building was donated by John Weast. It was dedicated by Rev. Father Steinberg in 1875. During the period of the pastorate of Rev. Father Kluck,

In 1878 the town was incorporated, the first officers being as follows: President, D. Davis; trustees, Charles Lauenstein, John Schmidt, Peter Petri, Henry Heineke, John Weast; clerk, O. L. Tucker; treasurer, O. A. Cavan. With the exception of three years, Theodore Schroeder has been on the board ever since the organization of the village.

In 1876 the first brick building was erected by

who was assigned to the church in 1902, the Father's Residence was erected. The church is now under the care of Rev. Father Guilbert.

The Baptist Sunday School was organized in 1874, and met in Coleman's hall for several years. In 1882 it was determined to build a place of worship and in 1883 the present church building was dedicated and the church organized with 28 members. The parsonage was erected in 1902. Rev. E. E. Krause has been pastor for some time, but resigned to take effect August 30. In connection with the church, is a country appointment at Jefferson school house. Here they have Sunday School and afternoon preaching. The early settlers of that part of the county organized what was known as the Meridian Baptist church, that held services in Washington school house in Linn township. This organization was maintained until after the building of the Baptist church in Minonk, when a number of its members united with the church there and services were abandoned at the Washington school. About eighteen year ago services were begun at the Jefferson.

The M. E. church was organized in 1890 by Rev. Foreman, services being held in the school house the first year. In 1891 the present church building was erected. Three years later a parsonage was also built near the church.

The Benson school was first located a mile east of town. A few years after the establishment of the town the school house was moved, and in 1878 a new frame building was erected, containing two rooms. Later a one room addition was built. As the town grew the demand for more adequate provision became more pressing and in 1905 a modern school building was erected at the cost of \$15,000 for the complete structure. The board having charge of the construction of the building was S. L. Peterson, H. D. Lewis, and F. W. Lineman.

Benson has suffered seriously from fire. In 1884 a conflagration broke out that destroyed the block in which Geo. G. Flessner's store is now located. A number of buildings were

destroyed. Only five years later a second fire occurred and destroyed the block of buildings where Hoffman & Bentfeld's store is now located. Some of the buildings have never been replaced but in most instances new and better structures have been erected.

In 1891 a system of water works was established. A committee, composed of Henry Heineke, Joseph Bucklear and A. H. Brubaker, was appointed to investigate the various plans, and as a result the present system was planned and completed.

The village is governed at present by the following officers: President, Louis Meischner; trustees, Eno. J. Gommels, Joseph Vogel, Theodore Schroeder, C. E. Worthington, M. C. Brubaker, Harm Geiken; clerk, J. W. Heiken; treasurer, R. C. Ficken; marshal, Wirt Folkers.

### Roanoke.

Situated in the midst of prairies of unsurpassed fertility, stretching for miles in every direction; underlain with rich deposits of coal that but needed the hand of man to bring them forth that they might pour their wealth into the coffers of the people, it is natural that Roanoke should become a prosperous little city. Forty years ago the present site of the town gave little evidence of important achievements or of the attainment of business success. Within the memory of the older citizens, Roanoke was founded, and these have witnessed its growth from a few scattered houses to a prosperous town with a thriving business.

In 1866 A. J. Darling opened a blacksmith shop in what is now the western part of town. He has witnessed the founding and development of the village. He is now conducting a hotel, while his sons, Darling Bros., have a blacksmith and machine shop. The first store was opened by M. Pifer, who is now one of the pioneer residents of the county. He resides at Eureka and is 93 years of age. He was a pioneer business man of Eureka as well as of Roanoke and was identified with the business interests there until increasing

age caused his retirement from active life. The store he owned was located on the south side of Panther creek. In the early 70's the plans for a new railroad were completed, and in 1872 the Chicago, Pekin and Southwestern was built thru the town. The citizens of the vicinity contributed \$5,000 toward building the road on condition that a switch would be put in at Roanoke. The same year that the railroad was built the town was laid out by D. T. Fauber, Ben G. Kindig and Hiram Barney. The plat was signed December 17, 1872. A postoffice was established and F. C. Pifer was appointed the first postmaster. He was soon succeeded by J. F. Wheelwright, who received a salary of \$12 per quarter. This was soon increased to \$72 a quarter. The office now pays \$1,300 per year.

The town at once began to improve. Henry Frantz put up the first building erected after the town was laid out and John Frantz opened a store. Jacob Engle, son of Peter Engle, the pioneer, also opened a store. The first doctor in the town was Dr. John, who served several terms as coroner. Fauber and Hall first bought grain in Roanoke, altho they never had an elevator. They also dealt in coal. The lumber yard was conducted by Doe Miller, but soon after passed into the hands of Phillip Moore, who was one of the pioneers in business life in that vicinity.

In 1874 a movement was set on foot to organize as a village. The town at that time had the 300 inhabitants necessary for its organization. A petition for such election was circulated and on July 18, 1874, the people voted to incorporate. John Frantz, M. N. Gish and A. Fisher were judges of election, and R. A. Fisher and R. T. Ogle were clerks. The first mayor was S. W. Shulenberger and the first clerk was G. P. Lyons.

The town and country surrounding enjoys an excellent telephone service, operated by the Roanoke Telephone Company, and under the efficient management of E. N. Wheelwright. The first line that sought admission to the

town was from Secor. A little later one came in from the south and west, and entered Wren's grain office. Soon after eight lines were carried into N. R. Moore's grain office. John Seoon was the first manager and in 1903, E. N. Wheelwright took the management of the exchange. In 1908 a stock company was formed, and now has 265 phones in operation. The office is nicely arranged and well equipped, and the wires along the main streets of town are underground.

In 1899 another important industry was started in Roanoke by George H. Willems, who in that year opened the tile and brick yards in that city. In 1906 he sold his interests to the American Clay Product Company, but Mr. Willems still manages the plant. The company gives employment to about 25 men the year around. The manager of this plant, George H. Willems, has an interesting life history, having spent twelve years on the sea. He has served before the mast and also down below. He also made one voyage as second mate. He was twice shipwrecked, once being tossed about in the life boat for three days and nights, finally coming to land on the Fiji islands, where the shipwrecked party was taken up. The second time he was wrecked on coast duty and swam ashore.

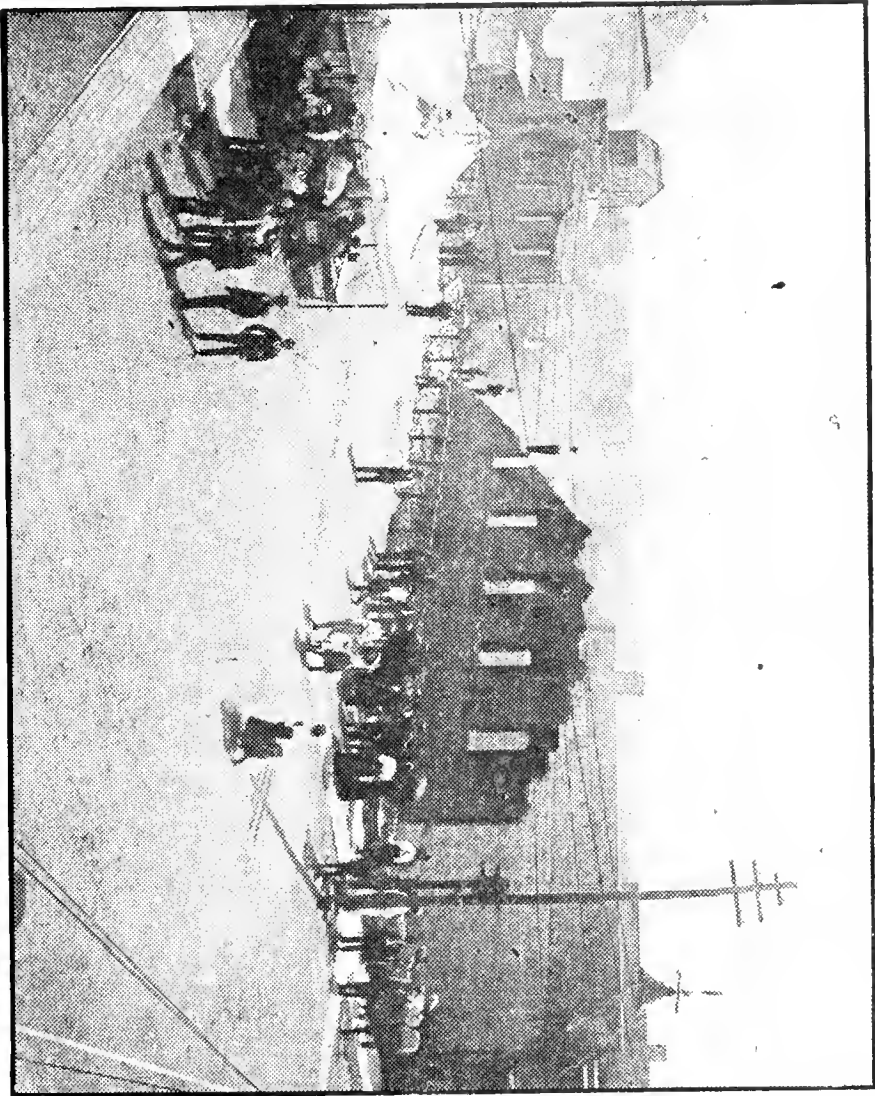
Roanoke has suffered seriously at various times from fire. In 1892 the west block was burned, destroying a number of buildings, entailing a loss approaching \$20,000. The fire started about midnight, and there was no means of fighting it save by the use of buckets. In 1902 a second fire occurred which destroyed the buildings on the east side of the street. Two years afterward A. Rosenak, whose store was destroyed in the second fire suffered a second loss in the burning of his store. In the spring of 1909 a number of frame buildings in the city hall block were burned causing a loss of several thousand dollars.

Altho Roanoke has a number of fine artisian wells that have stood the test for many years, the town has been slow about taking the steps for constructing a system of water

works. The city now has a good well and will doubtless soon have a good system in operation.

Roanoke has been lighted by electricity for a number of years. The plant has been owned and operated by E. E.

SCENE OF THE ROANOKE FIRE.



Husseman until W. J. Whetzel purchased it and furnishes light from his power house in Eureka.

The religious interests of the city and township are well looked to by a number of churches representing various denominations. In 1846 the Christian church was organized in the vicinity of Roanoke. As in so many cases, the early services were held in the homes of the members until a suit-

able place of worship could be secured. It was not until 1873 that their present church was erected. The organization was the result of the labor of Elder Abner Peeler. Two years later the Methodists began to hold services in the neighborhood, but their church was not built until 1875. In recent years the Catholic church has been erected at Roanoke, and has a number of members.

The schools of Roanoke have been the center of deep interest among the better class of people. The school has a three year high school course, and is prospering under the superintendency of O. C. Kindig. In 1909 the district was enlarged so as to take in two outlying districts, and a modern school building is in contemplation.

Among the names of men who have been prominent in the development of the town are C. A. Sauder, Henry Altofer and Theo. Herbst. The father of the former, Christian Sauder, came to Illinois fifty years ago and the name of Sauder has been highly respected thruout the county. Mr. Altofer has been in the county since 1874, and has been connected with the business interests of Roanoke for many years. Mr. Herbst has been prominent in the business enterprise of the town and has conducted an extensive establishment in the village for many years. A Rosenak has extensive business interests, and has been closely identified with the growth of the town.

The city is at present governed by the following officers: President, A. L. Ray; trustees, J. E. Woltzen, T. E. Brown, Samuel Ramsey, Charles Preller, John Gray, E. L. Fincham; clerk, A. J. Nafzinger; treasurer, Jacob Sand, Jr.; marshal, J. W. Fauber.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### Eureka.

**I**T is difficult to separate the history of Eureka from that of Eureka College, which institution was organized before the foundation of the town. At the time of the origin of the school there was no postoffice nearer than Washington, and mails were tardy in reaching their destination. In 1850 a postoffice was established and A. S. Fisher was the first postmaster. The mails were brought weekly from Metamora, until the Illinois Central was completed. The carrier went from Kappa to Spring Bay once a week. In 1854 the first goods were sold in Eureka in what was known as the "Poor House," a portion of the old Christian church devoted to the needs of the poor. This church was located near where the Soldiers' Monument stands in the cemetery. Thomas B. Sterrit sold goods there for a short time, and the next year built a store on the site now occupied by A. Boudman. Here he carried a general stock of goods that met the simple needs of the people of that time. His store was a general meeting place for the boys of the neighborhood, who had few places to go and little to talk about. The store building now forms a part of the Boudman residence.

Eureka received its name at a meeting held at the home of A. S. Fisher, when plans were being made for the establishment of a postoffice. John T. Jones and John Lindsey each claim the honor of having suggested the name for the new town. It is a word of Greek derivation, meaning, "I have found it." The word Eureka is said to have originated in the following interesting manner. King Hiero, of Syracuse, had a magnificent golden crown, of great value. He had taken it to a worker in gold to have some alteration

made in it, and on its return suspicioned that a part of the gold had been taken out and alloy had been substituted, but the work had been done so skillfully that it prevented detection. He called in Archimedes, and demanded that he should devise some means of detecting the presence of alloy, without in any way disturbing the crown as it was then made. After long pondering the philosopher conceived the idea of weighing the crown in the air and then weighing the water the crown would displace. So elated was he by his discovery that he went about shouting Eureka! Eureka! I have found it! From that time the word came into use.

After the completion of the Central railroad thru the eastern part of the county, mail was brought from Kappa. George Taggart was carrier, and at one time it was necessary for R. N. Radford who was acting as deputy postmaster, to go to Kappa after the mail, the carrier claiming that the waters were too high to make the trip. There was an accumulation of two weeks' mail. This irregularity continued until the completion of a railroad thru the town. When the T. P. & W. was built, however, it extended thru the region a mile north of the original site of the village.

In 1855 the town of Eureka was platted on its present site, the plat being drawn for John Darst, the owner of the land on which the new town was located. It was filed for record December 29th, 1855, and the early part of the year following, the first town lots were sold. The business part of the community was at once moved to the vicinity of the new railroad.

R. M. Clark built the first store on the new site, choosing as a location the corner of First and College streets, where R. D. Smith's brick building now stands. J. J. Jones erected a store about the same time. He had previously bought out Thomas Sterritt and had been made postmaster.

The first blacksmith shop was opened by Wilson Hathaway in 1854. The first hotel was erected by A. M. Myers on

the northeast corner of First and College streets. There had been boarding houses connected with the college previous to this, but no hotel. In 1851 a boarding hall had been erected that would accommodate fifty students. This later became a ladies' boarding hall and was ultimately destroyed by fire.

In 1856 H. C. Baird came to Eureka and entered business. A. V. S. Baird also came from the same state and became a resident of the new town. Mr. Baird is still in business and is the only one of the original business men of Eureka, who is still in active business. Another of the pioneers of the town, who still has a place of business there, is Ben L. Moore, the photographer, who has been conducting a gallery in Eureka forty-seven years, and is the oldest photographer now in business in the county.

One of the early enterprises of Eureka was a packing house, first located in the north part of town, on what is known as the Risser property, and under the management of Alex. Campbell. Later it was moved to a site near the Streator junction. There it was conducted by Thompson and Roebuck. The firm employed about thirty men and packed a large amount of pork daily. The plant was destroyed by fire.

In 1882 Gudeman Brothers purchased property in the north part of town from Ben L. Moore, and erected a saw mill. In a short time a large brick and tile factory was opened. The firm manufactured a high grade of pressed brick and enjoyed a large trade, but a combination of circumstances made the business unprofitable. The Eureka Brick Tile & Electric company was organized to get the concern on a paying basis, but the plant was finally closed.

The first system of water works was located on land donated by this firm to the city of Eureka. All the pumping was done by the firm, and the first electric light plant was installed by the same firm. On the closing of the plant of this company, C. C. McDonald bought the electric light plant,

and conducted it until 1905. In that year W. J. Whetzel installed his new plant and now furnishes lights for Eureka, Roanoke and Metamora.

In 1905 a new system of water works was constructed, the pressure used being supplied by compressed air. Since its construction it has been extended as far south as the college

The town grew from the time of its foundation, so that in 1859 it was incorporated. The first officers were as follows: Trustees, C. L. Wellman, J. R. Burton, R. M. Clark, Samuel Stitt and A. S. Fisher. Of these R. M. Clark was chosen president of the board and A. S. Fisher clerk. A. M. Myers was elected police magistrate. August 30th, 1880, the original charter was surrendered and it was incorporated as a village under the general law. At a meeting of the board of trustees March 4th, 1894, a petition was granted submitting the matter of incorporation as a city to a vote of the people. The result indicated 232 in favor of such incorporation and 152 opposed to it. The following were the first city officers: Mayor, B. J. Radford; clerk, Roy L. Moore; treasurer, Lyon Karr; aldermen, F. M. Hoyt, R. T. Payne, G. W. Lewis, C. H. Radford, W. W. Pratz and Frank Englis.

In 1909 the first paving was done, College street being paved from the railroad to the cemetery. The work will be carried on as rapidly as possible until the principal streets are paved.

The religious interests of the people are cared for by four churches. In 1832 the Christian church was organized with thirteen members at the home of Elder John Oatman. It was re-organized in 1836, and in 1847 they built their church which stood about where the soldiers' monument stands in the city cemetery. In 1863 a new church was erected on the site of the present structure. This served the purpose of a church until 1902, when the beautiful building now in use was erected at the cost of almost \$20,000.

In 1858 the M. E. church was organized by Zedock Hall, and in 1862 the church was erected. This served the purpose admirably until 1886 when the present building was erected. The Presbyterian church was organized in 1868, with Rev. Hart as its pastor, and in 1875 the present church was built.

The second church to organize in the vicinity of Walnut Grove was the Christian at Mt. Zion. Services are still held there and the organization is now more than half a century old.

Since the removal of the county seat to Eureka, it has enjoyed a slow but steady improvement. Better houses have been built, the town has put in more and better walks, and there has been a general tendency upward.

### **Cruger.**

The town of Cruger was platted May 15, 1856, by Benoni P. Pratt. It was named in honor of W. H. Cruger, who was vice-president and chief engineer of the railroad now known as the T. P. & W. The road was completed as far as Cruger in 1854, and the next year continued farther east. It was then that the first thots of a town were indulged in. The first warehouse was built by Mr. Kellogg and later Mr. King also erected one. The first store was opened by B. P. Pratt, who came from Peoria. A postoffice was established with William Flager, the station agent, as postmaster. This postoffice was continued until August, 1909, when Cruger was attached to Eureka, as part of one of the rural routes. F. J. Schreiber, whose death occurred a few years ago, was for more than forty years postmaster of Cruger. He was at that time the oldest acting postmaster in the United States in point of years of service. The height of its business prosperity was reached when two general stores were in operation.

### **Secor.**

The village of Secor was platted for Octave Chanut, June 10th, 1857. The new town was on each side of the railroad, and soon began to attract settlers. It was named for Zeno Secor, one of the directors of the recently completed

railroad. The streets were named for men, such as Van Alstine, Hereford, Nichols and Cruger streets.

The first store was conducted by E. T. VanAlstine, father of John VanAlstine, and grandfather to Frank A. and L. H. VanAlstine, widely known thruout the county as having been circuit clerks. Jacob Lahr and Henry Smith had blacksmith shops. Another early blacksmith was Christian Mahlstet who came to Secor from Cruger. F. X. Hau-sler opened a furniture store. A postoffice was established and Mr. VanAlstine was the first postmaster. Charles R. Richardson was another of the early merchants, and Deacon Trosber was the first to conduct a boarding house. Dr. P. L. Tribbey came to Secor in 1857, John Tribbey, his brother, came the same year, while D. W. Tribbey came in 1859 and S. A. Tribbey a year later. The first named served two terms as coroner of the county. Rudolph Harseim came there in 1862 and opened a general store. This was later owned by his son, E. J. Harseim, and has now passed into the hands of his younger son, Adolph R. Harseim. In 1866 H. Ludwig engaged in business there and is still conducting a hardware store. One of the most extensive investments made in the town was the great hotel erected by Isaac Underhill. It was a two-story brick structure, with four large store rooms on the first floor. The second story was used for a hotel and sanitarium. Mr. Underhill owned a large amount of land around Secor, and had extensive plans for the future of the town, but the plans failed. The hotel was closed and its owner suffered heavy losses. It was finally destroyed by fire. The original cost was \$48,000.

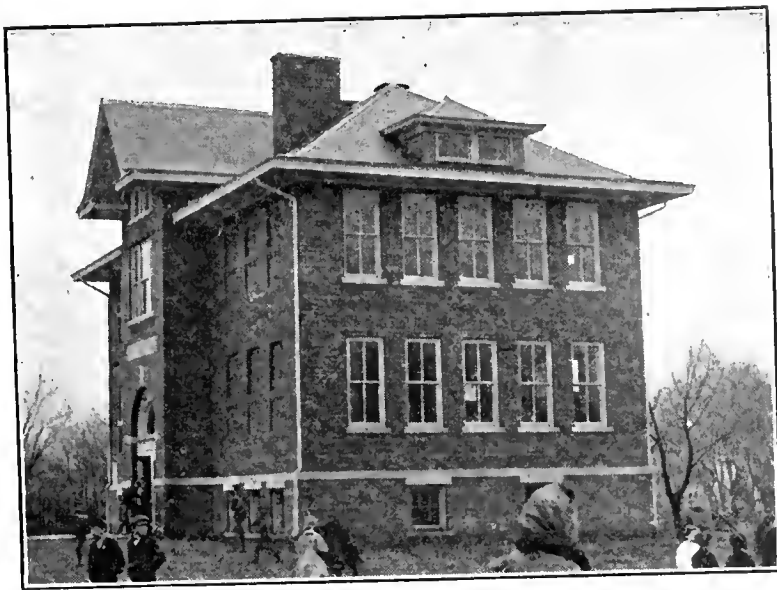
John Seibel was an early comer in Secor, arriving there in September, 1869, and lived there three years. The family then moved to a farm three miles southwest of Benson. His son, William C., and daughter, Catherine, reside in Secor, while Henry lives near town.

There are four churches in Secor. In 1862 the Church of Christ was erected and still serves as a place of worship.

Twelve years ago a part of this organization withdrew and built a new church of Christ. The M. E. church was built in 1865-'66. It was originally for both English and German services, but of late years the services in German have been abandoned. The Lutheran church was established in 1864-'65 and it has one of the largest congregations in that vicinity.

The first telephone exchange was organized in 1899, with W. B. Graybill as manager. The company has 225 telephones now in operation. A separate exchange has now been installed.

In 1906 a large modern school building was erected at the cost of over \$10,000. It has four school rooms, aside from the library and superintendent's office. The school is now under the management of Prof. William C. Stauter. The present structure devoted to education is the result of many years' progress. The first school was established in Se-



**SECOR SCHOOL.**

cor in 1857; but in 1860 it was found necessary to erect a larger building. This was improved and enlarged, but finally gave way to the larger, more modern brick structure now in use.

The records of the secretary of state show that Secor was incorporated as a town under a special act of the legislature, February 28th, 1867. It was later incorporated as a village, but no report of such action was ever made to the secretary of state. It became necessary to resubmit the matter to a vote of the people, which was done in 1902, and it became incorporated under the general law. The following were the first town officers: President, R. L. Sidwell; clerk, D. C. Smith; trustees, David Gephart, Henry Dierking, George Thode and John Noffsinger.

The village at present has the following corps of officers: President, George Goebel; clerk, J. T. Warner; trustees, Ira Powell, John Frey, Wm. Dehority, William Seibel, L. R. Deiner and Wm. Muhlstedt; treasurer, H. Reed; police magistrate, L. G. Wilson; marshal, Charles Zimmers.

Secor, like many of the other towns of the county, has suffered greatly on several occasions from fire. In 1874 the Grand Hotel was destroyed entailing a loss of forty thousand dollars on its owners and there was but little insurance to cover it. After this a few years, a second fire occurred that destroyed the block facing the railroad. In this fire H. Ludwig lost his home and his family had a narrow escape. The loss was quite heavy. December 28, 1905, the east half of the main business block was burned. The fire broke out in the middle of the night and could not be checked until the street was reached. These buildings have been replaced by a number of better buildings than before occupied that site. H. Ludwig, who suffered from this fire also has rebuilt. The Secor hotel is another of these buildings.

Zeiger and Ludwig assumed control of their general store in 1907, having succeeded Flessner and Zeiger who had been in business about eleven years. Goebel and Gassner have a stock of general merchandise, occupying the stand so long occupied by E. F. Dierking. As before noticed, Adolph Harseim has a large general store. H. I. Brown and C. W. Frey have extensive hardware and implement stores, and



Charles de Long conducts the lumber yard and does contracting.

### **Panola.**

Panola was one of the villages along the Illinois Central road, and it at one time seemed likely to become a town of considerable importance. As the county became more thickly settled and other railroads were built, it began to lose its hopes of a great future, and settled down to the quiet life it has since enjoyed. The railroad was built in sections, and reached Panola before it was constructed thru Minonk. Timothy O'Connell, who aided in building the Central road, still lives there. Altho 82 years of age, his memory is still filled with stories of the early history of his township. He remembers having planted the park around the station many years ago. He was one of the first men to work on the Central at Cairo. On the completion of the road steps were taken for the establishment of a town. A station was built in 1854, and B. Stockwell was the first agent. He was later followed by N. L. Seever and John Parks. The same year a postoffice was established there and F. I. Barnard became the first postmaster. The first buildings were erected by the Central. Aside from these, William Crosley moved the first house to town from Greene township, and F. I. Barnard erected the first building. Thomas Elwright established a boarding house, his patrons being principally railroad men. The first store was opened by William Crosley and Thomas Patterson in the fall of 1854. Steps were taken at an early date for the establishment of a town, it was platted for the Illinois Central, that owned the property on which the town was located, May 16th, 1855. The main streets were named for the common varieties of trees, such as Hickory, Walnut, Chestnut, Oak, Locust and Poplar. In 1855 James Dye opened a lumber yard and Henry Saltsman also opened his place of business the same year. The town grew rapidly, more business houses were erected and the people enjoyed an extensive trade. Among those who traded in Panola was

the Ray family. John Ray still has in his possession a bill for goods purchased of Crosley and Lewis, bearing the date of 1854. One of the articles mentioned in the bill was a pair of glasses, which Mr. Ray still has in his possession.

There was originally a turntable south of Panola and the engines took wood there. Michael Kelly had charge of wooding the locomotives, and Michael Klug looked after the pumping.

The first church organized was of the Baptist denomination in 1857. It drew many of its members from the Willow Tree Baptist church, which had been organized in Greene township a year earlier. This church prospered and in 1866 a neat building was erected. In 1862 the United Brethren began to hold services, and in 1875 they erected a church, northeast of Panola. This structure has in recent years fallen into the hands of the Methodist Episcopal church, and is a part of the Gridley circuit. In 1909 they erected a new building at the cost of \$5,000. The Evangelical church now has services in town, being served by the pastor of the Evangelical church at El Paso.

In 1856 the people of Panola suffered a serious disappointment. They had expected that the Toledo, Peoria and Warsaw railroad would cross the Central there and greatly increase the importance of the town by making it a railroad junction. For some reason the road went two miles south of Panola, and the town never quite recovered from the effects of this disappointment. El Paso reaped the benefits that Panola had hoped to receive.

### **Kappa.**

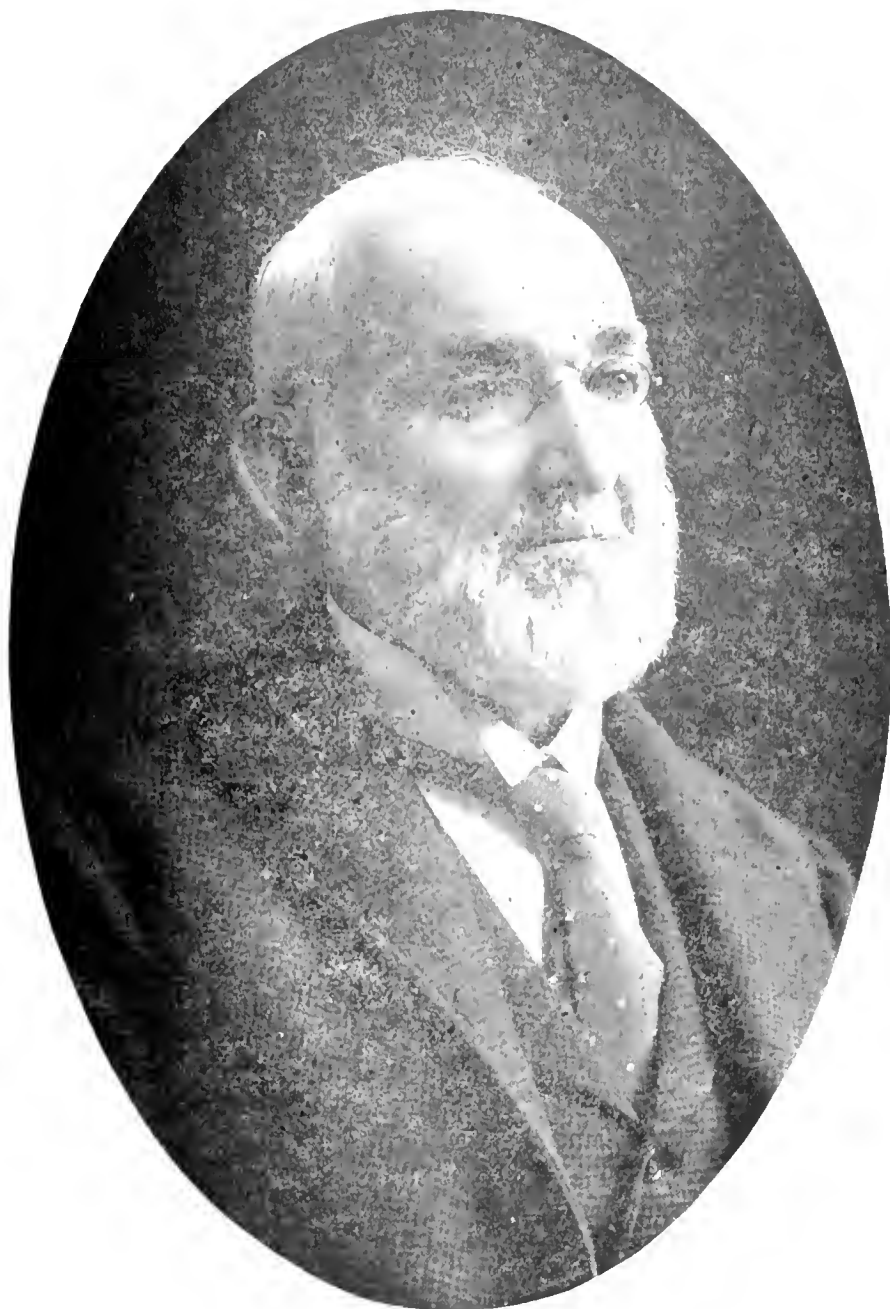
Prior to the establishment of the present village of Kappa in 1854, there was a postoffice located a short distance south of the town as it is now located. This was on a mail route between Ottawa and Bloomington, and deliveries were made there twice a week. The first postmaster was Caleb Horn. When the Illinois Central railroad was built thru the township, the village was established where it now stands.

There were but few settlers in that vicinity at that time, and the location seemed especially promising for a town. It soon entered upon an era of prosperity that gave foundation for high hopes for its future greatness. These hopes were encouraged by a rumor that a new railroad from Peoria east would cross the Central at Kappa. The town soon became an important grain center. Farmers hauled grain for miles around to Kappa for shipment. Towns with railroad accommodations were widely scattered, and these drew grain from a wide territory. When the new railroad was built and the crossing with the Central was at El Paso, that town soon became a growing, prosperous village, while Kappa began to lose the prestige it had gained.

The first agent at this place was C. D. Cook, the father of John W. Cook, now president of the Northern Illinois Normal School, at DeKalb, and who enjoys a national reputation as an educator. After leaving Kappa Mr. Cook became prominent in the affairs of Illinois. He was appointed by the state to look after the collection of its war claims against the National government. He also had charge of a like commission from Missouri.

J. W. Mann came from Boston to Kappa in March and was agent there for twenty years. He at one time also bought grain and stock there. When he gave up the agency, the Illinois Central Company gave him a lot on which his store now stands.

Ira C. Stone, known far and wide as the oldest man in the county, came to Kappa from Buffalo, New York, in 1859, with his wife, son and daughter. These have all since died and Mr. Stone now has no blood relative living. He has passed his ninety-ninth year, and bids fair to live beyond his one hundredth. On coming to Kappa he entered business and for many years conducted a general store and bought grain. The change from the city to the wild region to which they had come was very great yet they soon became accustomed to the new ways of the people in the west, as



IRA C. STONE.

this was termed. Mr. Stone is remarkably well preserved for a man of his age, and his mind retains the vigor and activity of a much younger man. He and his son, Eugene, were connected with the enterprises of that portion of Woodford county for many years.

One of the first business men of Kappa was Asa Sparks, who kept a general stock of merchandise. He was preceded, however, by Mr. Reed, who was in turn preceded by a Canadian, who was the first business man in the village.

Christian Schafer was another of the early business men of the town. He entered business and remained there until the business tides set in favor of ElPaso, when he removed to that place. He was very prosperous and at the time of his death was one of the wealthiest men in the county.

About 1858 a German Lutheran church was formed, but it was later transferred to ElPaso. In 1855 the M. E. class was organized and in 1874 a neat church was erected. The organization is a part of the Gridley charge. The Evangelical church also holds services there, the two congregations meeting at different hours on the Sabbath day. The pastor of the Kappa church also preaches at the Centennial church in Palestine township.

One of the more recent improvements is the introduction of the rural telephone, with the central in the grain office. This has been in-operation for about eight years, and has an extensive system of phones.

In 1884 the village was organized under the general law. I. C. Stone was the first mayor of the village. The officers at present are as follows: President, E. E. Crawford; clerk, E. W. Porter, treasurer, J. C. McGraw; trustees, C. D. Witt, Ed. S. Summers, B. D. McClure, H. H. McClure, Eugene Porter and W. M. Motherway.

After the completion of the Central road, mail was carried from Kappa to Eureka, Spring Bay and intermediate points, it being delivered twice a week. The building of

other railroads soon took from the village its prestige in this line also.

### Low Point.

Low Point was first established at a point over a half mile southwest of the present site of the village. It derived the name from a low point of timber land on the south fork of Richland creek. The postoffice was on the stage route from Chicago, which was at that time an important line of travel. The first postmaster was William Dodds. Later J. E. Dodds conducted a store there, and continued to do business at that point until 1871, when he removed his store to the present site of Low Point. He was postmaster both before and after the removal of the office. A saw mill was put in operation in 1847, and did an extensive business. At that time goods were hauled to and from Peoria, Spring Bay, Chillicothe and Lacon, these being the nearest markets and sources of supply.

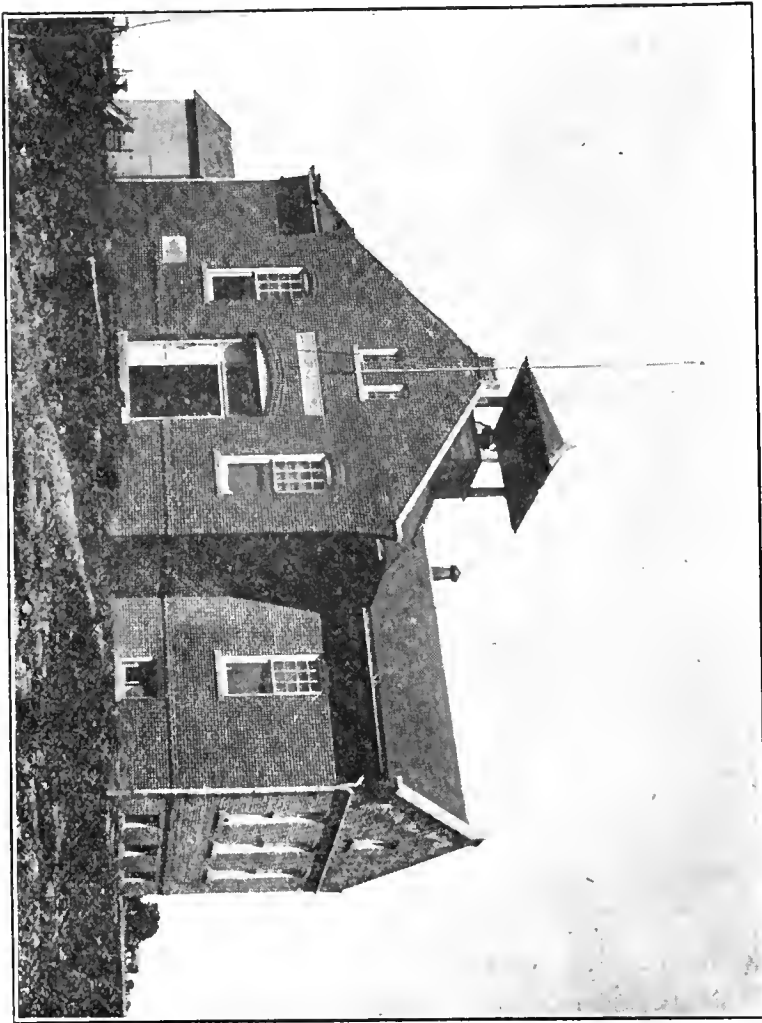
The completion of the railroad thru the township gave a new impetus to its growth and resulted in building up three towns along its line of road within the township of Cazenovia.

As previously suggested the site of Low Point changed and it was laid out near the railroad. In 1871 D. H. Davison, who is surveyor at the present time, surveyed the town for James G. Bayne, who came to the county in 1846. One of the early enterprises of the town was a tile factory, first opened by John Pinkerton, but operated by his son, Oscar. Of late the plant has fallen into disuse and decay.

The business interests of the town changed hands quite frequently. J. E. Dodds and F. M. Patton formed a partnership and erected one of the buildings now occupied by Banta Bros., and conducted a general store. Other names among the business records of the town are those of Charles and Joseph McCulloch, Smith and Amsler. Finally the business interests of the town came into the hands of Banta Brothers & Company. This enterprising firm now controls the lum-

ber, grain, stock, implement, merchandise, grocery and banking interests. They employ a large number of men and do an extensive business. This has made necessary new quarters and they are at present engaged on a large new building.

LOW POINT SCHOOL.



There is a telephone exchange in connection with their other branches, and a number of country lines run into their central office.

In 1848 the first school house was built, many years before the founding of the town. The first teacher was Orson Cheedle. It was located on the outskirts of the town. In 1905 a convenient brick school house was erected and high school work was introduced under the principalship of Prof.

Harry Andrews. The building has two rooms equipped for school use.

In 1851 a Methodist church was built there under the leadership of their pastor, and it was dedicated by Rev. J. S. Cummins, who was presiding elder at that time. The class had been previously organized, and held services for some time without the convenience of a church.

#### **Cazenovia.**

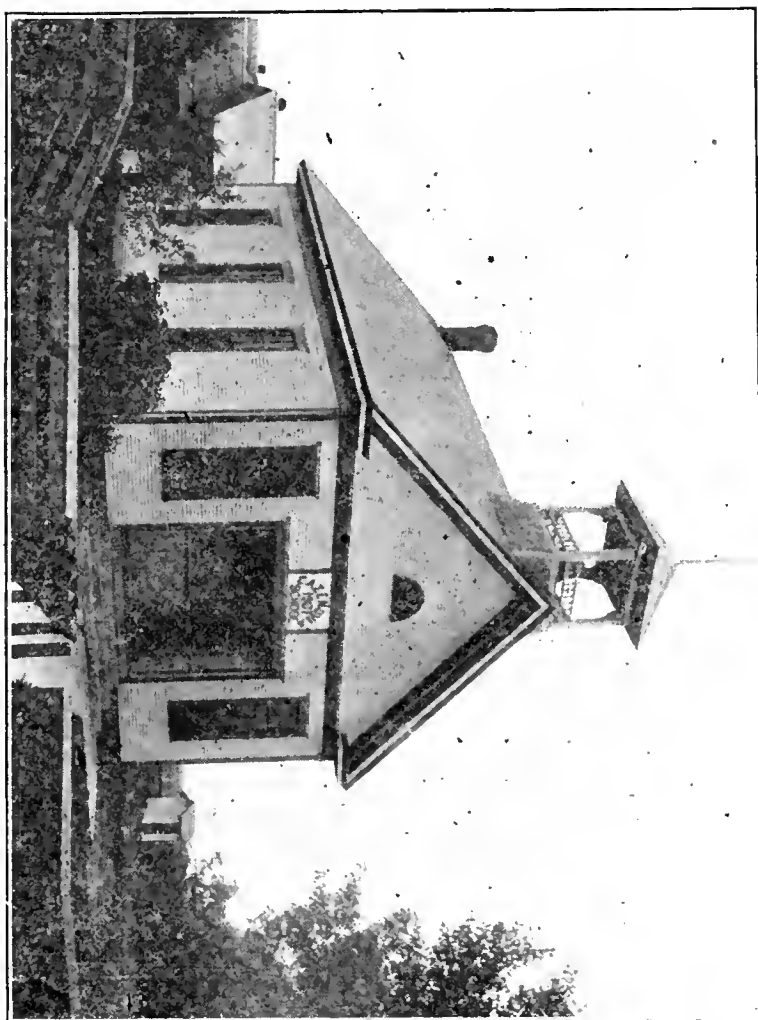
On the completion of the railroad thru the township, a second town sprang up within two miles of Low Point, named Cazenovia for the township. It was laid out for W. O. Hammers and E. N. Farnsworth in 1870. The postoffice was at once established and W. O. Hammers was the first postmaster. John Hamilton, a brother of Mrs. Isaac Boys, was the first station agent. Wikoff & Bowen conducted the first grocery on the site of the Speas Bros. store building. Nick Portman, of Metamora, started the first dry goods store in a building owned by E. N. Farnsworth, W. O. Hammers and Richard Tanton. The first blacksmith shop was owned by a man named Kise. At the present time the large general store is conducted by Speas Bros. The hardware and implement business is owned by Bachman Bros. The farmers in the vicinity of Cazenovia enjoy free telephone services. The county lines organized were among the first in that vicinity. They now have 15 of these running into their exchange in Bachman Bros.' office, and have over 150 phones on the line. Both Bachman Bros. and Speas Bros. have large brick buildings that are both substantial and convenient.

In 1858 the first school was built. In 1907 a new and modern structure was erected. It is one story in height and 60 by 20 feet. The first church was built by the Baptist congregation in 1873, being dedicated the first Sunday in January, 1874. The dedication sermon was delivered by Rev. C. D. Merit, of Fairbury, who is named in the history of Mignonk as the founder of the Baptist church in that city. Rev. W. E. James was first pastor of the new church, and resid-



ed in Washburn until April, 1874, when he moved to Cazenovia. The lot on which the church was built was donated

CAZENOVIA SCHOOL.



by Mary A. Farnsworth. Since 1893 no services have been held in that church. Rev. Musser, of Metamora, was the last pastor.

A second church was built after this by the Christian congregation. This pulpit has been supplied for a number of years by students from Eureka College. There is a union Sunday school with an enrollment of 25 or 30 pupils.

### **Woodford.**

There is another grain station in Minonk township besides Minonk. In 1874 John Warren had the town of Wood-

ford platted. It is located three miles south of Minonk, and a station was established with Jacob M. Holder as the first agent. The first store was opened by Henry Patton, who was also appointed the first postmaster. Six years ago the town suffered a fire that destroyed several business houses, including the postoffice. Since then the mail has been cared for in the grain office. The destroyed store buildings have never been rebuilt. The one store in town is conducted by Mr. Schlink.

### **Goodfield and Congerville.**

In 1888 the village of Schrock and Guthville were surveyed, the former for Joseph Schrock, January 2nd, of that year, and the latter for John Guth, August 29th. The building of the Lake Erie and Western railroad led to the estab-



**CONGERVILLE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL.**

lishment of the above towns, and the opening of convenient markets in the southern part of the county. The names of the villages afterward became Congerville and Goodfield, respectively.

The first postmaster at the former was Gus Naffzinger. The first business men were Gus Naffzinger and Marshall Bros., each of whom conducted a general store. The first grain dealer was J. F. Tobias and the present dealer, Leslie Reel. There are two churches, Lutheran and Mennonite. The

pride of the village is their handsome school building which was erected at a cost of more than \$10,000.

The village of Goodfield is also in Montgomery township. Shortly after its organization a store was opened by Mr. Zimmerman and Hohulin Bros. soon began their implement business. In 1891 a Baptist church was erected there and is still prosperous. It is a part of the Deer Creek charge. The same year a Methodist church was erected north of Goodfield, known as Galey chapel. Rev. A. O. H. de la Gardie being pastor at the time. This has since been abandoned and sold. A handsome brick school house has recently been erected and two teachers are now employed. It was erected in 1907. Simon Naffzinger has become a prominent figure in the business and political life of Goodfield during recent years.

## CHAPTER XX.

### Miscellaneous.

**I**N recent years the annual picnic of the Old Settlers' Association has come to be very popular, and thousands of people attend the exercises given under the auspices of that organization each year. The pioneer hardships endured, serve to unite the early settlers thru the ties of common interest, and they gather in great numbers to renew acquaintanceships and exchange reminiscences of pioneer days. These gatherings are also a source of great interest to the younger generations. The stories of early struggles, endured with unflinching courage, awaken strong admiration in the hearts of those more favorably situated, as are the men of today. The programs presented consist of addresses and talks by men who have experienced some of the hardships of life in an undeveloped country.

In 1874 the Old Settlers' Association was organized, and the year following the first meeting was held at Eureka. The following were the first officers chosen: President, John Summers; vice-president, W. R. Willis; secretary, R. N. Radford; corresponding secretary, B. D. Meek; treasurer, P. H. Vance. The meeting of 1876 was held at Eureka July 4th, and that of 1877 was at Metamora. The constitution at that time provided that any one who was a resident of the county at the time of its organization in 1841 could become a member. The association at its first meeting elected the following vice-presidents from the various townships: Montgomery, H. A. Robinson; Metamora, John W. Page; Cruger, M. E. Davidson; Palestine, L. P. Hereford; Panola, M. R.

Bullock; Greene, Thomas A. McCord; Ohio, Thomas Bullock, Sr.; Worth, Charles Molitor; Partridge, Isaac Snyder; Cazenovia, Jesse Hammers; Clayton, Harvey Davison; ElPaso, H. W. Bullock; Kansas, A. W. Carlock; Roanoke, Jacob Banta; Spring Bay, Dr. J. G. Zeller; Minonk, E. D. Davison.

The list of the original members of the association can not be obtained, but from other sources a few of the names of members have been secured. In addition to the above named officers were the following: Adino Page, W. C. Watkins, Zadock Hall, D. Kindig, W. Lamson, George Arrow-smith, Thomas Clark, Wm. H. Delph, Benj. Grove, John Warren, Abner Mundell, Simeon Mundell, Jesse Hammers, Samuel Mundell, W. Drennen, John Tanton, Richard Tanton, Thaddeus Page, N. Dutton, W. P. Brown, D. D. Fairchild, L. P. Morse, J. G. Bayne, Joseph Morley, J. S. Whitmire, Henry Martin, B. J. Radford.

The association was not maintained with unimpaired regularity. For a time its meetings were abandoned, and in 1891 a meeting was held in ElPaso for the purpose of reorganizing the association. A new constitution was adopted and the requirements for membership were changed. It is now asked that an applicant for membership be over 50 years of age and that he has lived in the county at least 35 years. The meetings in 1891 and '92 were held at ElPaso, 1893, '94, '95, '96, '97, '98, '99, and 1900 at the camp ground in Eureka. In 1901 the meeting was held at Metamora and that city was chosen as the permanent home of the association. The following have served as presidents of the organization in the order in which they are given. Presidents: Samuel Stitt, F. D. Learned, W. M. Bullock, S. H. McClure, J. H. Reeder, E. S. Fursman, B. J. Radford, James W. Pleasant, M. W. Wilson and John L. McGuire. E. W. Dickinson has served as secretary-treasurer for a number of years. The records of this association bring to mind the names of many settlers not previously mentioned.

One of these pioneers who came to this county at an

early date was Jehu Hinshaw. His father, George Hinshaw, came to Blooming Grove, near the present site of Bloomington, in 1827. There was no town there at the time of his coming. In 1840 he moved to Kansas township, J. D. Franklin coming at the same time. Dolphus Hinshaw, who now resides in Eureka, is the son of Jehu Hinshaw and has many interesting memories of pioneers experiences. The prairies were wild and unbroken. His father was one of the settlers that marked the roads between East White Oak Grove and Bloomington. This was twelve miles in length and did not follow any direct line, but wound around, the highest ground being chosen, as it was less likely to become swampy or to be covered by ponds. The road was marked by plowing a furrow on each side of it with a prairie plow and ox team. Much time was spent in hunting in those days and Jehu Hinshaw, Winton Carlock, Zachary Brown and Isaac Allen spent many a day in the pleasures of the hunt. Deer were very plentiful and these were the hunter's coveted prize. Many of them were quite gentle and would come up to the houses. On one occasion a deer came up to the fence that surrounded Mr. Hinshaw's yard and looked over the fence. Mrs. Hinshaw shot at it, but failed to bring it down. The only apparent result was that it tossed its head and ran away.

The last few years of the life of this pioneer were spent at Eureka, where his death occurred at the advanced age of 86 years.

In 1856 Andrew Tomb came to Woodford county and settled in the vicinity of Eureka. Mrs. Tomb remembers when the postoffice, grocery and dry goods store were all in a single small building. She also recalls many of the great changes that have occurred since that time. Several of the members of this family have been widely known in the county. Andrew C. and John C. Tomb are each of them well known in a business way. The former conducts an extensive poultry business, and the latter was at one time

connected with him, but he has recently moved to the home farm, northwest of Eureka. Other children are James, Mary and William Tomb.

Much earlier than this, Matthew Tomb, a brother of Andrew, came to this county and settled. His family experienced many of the pioneer hardships. Of the members of this home, but one remains, John W. Tomb. Another son, A. J. Tomb, was a resident of Eureka for a number of years, but at the time of his death was a resident of Peoria.

Another Matthew Tomb, a cousin of Andrew and Matthew Tomb previously referred to, came thru from Ohio in 1855, as was usually the case they made the trip across the states in wagons, and naturally met with many hindrances on the way. He was the father of a number of children, who have since become widely known thruout the county. R. D., John and Smith Tomb are sons, while Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Ed. Moore and Mrs. Grant are daughters.

Two other pioneers are Mr. and Mrs. Peter Kennell, each of whom were born in the county. Christian Kennell, the father of Peter, came to Woodford county from France in 1842, and settled in Worth township. His death occurred in Metamora about 18 years ago. Other members of this family are Christian and Joseph Camp. Mrs. Kennell's father, Debolt Housholter, Sr., came here from the borderland of France, having first stopped in Pittsburg a short time. The family settled in Worth township about 1846. Of the members of this family still residing in Woodford county are Debolt Housholter, Jr., Mrs. Joseph Camp and Mrs. Christian Risser.

James Finley came to Woodford county in 1836 and settled in what was then known as Walnut Grove. He came to Woodford county from Cecil county, Maryland, and built a log cabin near the present site of the college campus in Eureka. He, together with the Meeks, Radfords, Davidsons, Majors, Dickinsons and Oatmans, was among the early settlers of that region. The family later moved to Versailles

and finally moved onto a square section on the Mackinaw river, there Shelby M. Cullom broke prairie for them in 1850. The parents of Senator Cullom came to Illinois while it was still a new state and settled near the borders of Woodford county. Here the childhood of the present senator was spent, and he experienced many pioneer hardships. He broke a great deal of prairie land, and was employed by Mr. Finley in this task. An ox team was used in breaking the prairies. Sammel Finley, one of his sons, was a well known figure in the county for many years. He grew up with a great love of the woods and was never so happy as when on a hunting trip. He provided game for the table, and made a practice of selling game and furs. During the years when Mr. Finley was an active hunter, he killed more than three hundred deer. In one day he brought down four of these animals. He killed three one morning before breakfast, and on one occasion killed two bucks with one shot from his rifle. He bagged more than three hundred wild turkey the largest of which weighed over thirty pounds. On one occasion he and his brother got eighty-seven prairie chickens in about eight hours with rifles. Foxes, wolves, raccoons, opossums and many other varieties of game fell before the rifle of this sturdy hunter. Mrs. Samuel Finley also came from a pioneer family, her maiden name being Laytin. The family settled in Tazewell county near the settlement made by the Culloms and Smalls. As was customary in those days, she spent many a day in the harvest field, and she was accustomed to spin and weave, as were most of the housewives of pioneer days.

J. C. Finley of Eureka is a grandson of James Finley, the pioneer. Charles Finley is another of the descendants of this settler.

Among other well known names are those of the Brubakers of Eureka. In the early days of the development of the county Benjamin Brubaker came here from Ohio. As was customary the journey was made across country in covered wagons, about two months being consumed in the



trip. They first came to the state with the intention of settling in the vicinity of Rockford and Mr. Brubaker started out on horseback to go to that place to select a farm. Before traveling a great distance he came up with a man, who was walking. He dismounted and walked a distance with him, and was told of a farm for sale just west of the present site of Eureka. Instead of continuing his journey, Mr. Brubaker turned back, visited the farm and purchased it. The family retained possession of it until about 1876. It is now known as the H. K. Swisher farm. Seven children came with their parents to this county, and of this number but two remain in the county, Peter and David Brubaker, both of Eureka. Four members of this family enlisted in the Union army, Peter and David being among the number. Among the younger generation are a number of well known men, among them being W. H. Brubaker, a prominent business man of Benson.

Christopher Roth came to America in 1844, and first settled in Texas. He remained there but a short time and moved north. He finally came to Illinois about 1847, and settled in the vicinity of Metamora. But one representative of the family is still a resident of the county: Jacob Roth, for many years a well known business man of the county.

F. F. Briggs, for many years a prominent figure in the business circles of Metamora, came to Illinois in 1851, and soon embarked in the undertaking business in the county seat. He was a man who was very accurate in keeping his books, and he had a record of funerals conducted during a half century of business life. Several members of this family continue to reside in the county.

One of England's contributions to the growth of Woodford county was Thomas Whorrall, who came to Metamora at an early date. He was a prominent member of the church and frequently filled the pulpit in various churches of the Methodist denomination of which he was a member. He occupied the farm and met with success in his chosen field of

labor. A number of years ago he removed to Iowa and settled in Grundy county. Other members of the family located in that state, and they prospered in their new home. Since going to Iowa both Mr. and Mrs. Whorrall have died. They have four sons there now, E. E. and Joseph Whorrall, of Beaman; James and William Whorrall, of Conrad. Rev. Charles Whorrall, whose burial recently occurred at Washburn, was another son of this estimable couple. He was prominent as a minister of the Presbyterian church.

The Hammers family has been identified with the history of the country now known as Woodford county since A. D. 1835, at which time Jesse Hammers came with his family from Greene county, Pennsylvania, to what was at that time a part of Tazewell county and settled just west of the present village of Cazenovia, in the edge of the Illinois river timber, the greater part of his farm lying on the prairie adjoining the timber. His father-in-law, Isaac Buckingham, and his brother-in-law, James Boys, who was one of the first county commissioners of Woodford county, having come from Pennsylvania and settled in the same neighborhood a year or two prior to his coming.

Jesse Hammers lived on the farm where he first settled all the rest of his life and died there in 1880. He was always interested in the development of the new country and did much personally to advance its agricultural, horticultural and live stock interests. He encouraged the development of the educational and religious interests of the community and did his share towards the establishment of schools and churches. He also assisted in the organization of the county fair held for many years at Metamora and was for some time president of that organization. He was the first breeder of Short Horn cattle in the county, a business which his son-in-law, Hon. P. A. Coen, afterwards also carried on very successfully. At his death he left surviving him his widow, Ruah Hammers, who has since died, and his children Joseph S.

Hammers, Morgan B. Hammers, James A. Hammers and William O. Hammers.

Joseph S. Hammers came with his father, Jesse Hammers, to the country, afterwards Woodford county, in 1835 when he was but two years of age. In 1856 he was elected county surveyor and served in that capacity four years. In 1857 he settled on a farm in Greene township, upon which farm he resided until his death, which occurred in 1893. He was a successful farmer and stockman and a prominent breeder of short-horn cattle. He left surviving him his widow, Eleanor Hammers, and his children, Isaac B. Hammers, Laura H. Nelson, Charles H. Hammers, Lewis J. Hammers, James R. Hammers and William E. Hammers all of whom still reside in the county except Laura H. Nelson, who resides at Ainsworth, Iowa, and Lewis J. Hammers who is a prominent doctor at Lexington, Illinois.

Isaac B. Hammers is an attorney at El Paso, Illinois, and represented this senatorial district in the 39th and 40th General Assemblies.

Morgan B. Hammers settled in Greene township and resided there until his death in 1882. He left surviving him Rosa B. Hammers, his widow and his children, Ella B. Hammers, Lillian Hammers, Jesse Hammers, Morgan Hammers and Edna Hammers.

James A. Hammers at the beginning of the civil war enlisted as a private in the 77th Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry and served three years and re-enlisted and was mustered out as orderly sargeant, his rank having been conferred upon him for bravery in action. After the close of the war he settled on a farm which was part of the original homestead of Jesse Hammers where he resided until 1878, in which year he went to Anthony, Kansas, and now resides in Los Angeles, California.

William O. Hammers at the breaking out of the civil war enlisted in the 77th Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry and was chosen Lieutenant of his company. He re-

mained in the active service for about two years when his health failed and he resigned and came home to recover his health. After some time he re-entered Chicago University and was in due course graduated from that school. He located on the farm where Cazenovia now stands and lived there until 1878. He now resides at Eunice, La.



JOHN LEYS.

About 1850 Joseph Hammers, father of Jesse Hammers and James Hammers, Joseph T. Hammers and his sister, Mary Myers, with their families came out from Pennsylvania and settled in Greene township in Woodford county, where Joseph Hammers and his wife died. Mary Myers afterwards removed to Pano-la in said county and died there about 1880. Joseph T. Hammers, James Hammers and Samuel Hammers all re-

moved from the county in 1874 or prior to that date and for many years lived at or near Clearwater, Kansas, at which place the most of their children still reside.

The county has profited by coming in touch with the Hammers family as they one and all have been good citizens and patriotic, progressive, high-minded men.

The Woodford County Agricultural Association of which Jesse Hammers was one of the organizers was formed in 1858. Its object was to hold an annual fair at Metamora. The following were the officers: President, Jesse Hammers; vice-president, Charles Rich; secretary, H. L. S. Haskell; treasurer, John W. Page; directors, Horace Hazen,

George Ray and John J. Perry. While the fair was a great success in other ways, it was not a success financially and was abandoned in 1870.

One of the most familiar figures in connection with official affairs of the county was that of John Leys. For thirty-one years he was either a deputy or official in the service of Woodford county, and was as well versed in the duties of the various positions that he filled as any one in this portion of Illinois.

He was born in Burges, Belgium, March 21st, 1837, and his early education was gained while living there. He later attended the Antwerp Naval school and spent some years as a sailor and received a certificate of navigation from the French government. In 1857 he came to Chicago and from there came to Woodford county. Later he removed to McLean county. He enlisted in Company C of the 33rd Infantry, August 15th, 1861, at Bloomington.

On the day of his return from the war, he was married to Miss Ann Taylor. Six children were born to this union, of whom Edna L. Evey, Anna L. Hodgson, J. H. and J. Albert Leys, still survive.

The newly married couple settled in Kansas township and remained there until 1874, when Mr. Leys was appointed deputy county clerk. He served as deputy until 1886, when he was elected county clerk. After one term he again became deputy, and served until 1894, when he was appointed to fill the unexpired term of T. A. Huxtable. His death occurred at Eureka, December 1st, 1905, having been in the service of the county thirty-one years.

James Shields, Sr., came to Clayton township at an early date in its development and purchased the farm now occupied by his son, John Shields. It was bought from the Illinois Central, which had secured it directly from the government as a part of the grant received to aid in the construction of the road. Of this family James and John Shields reside in the county, as do also two daughters, Mrs. Charles Hoffman and Mrs. Frank Bentfeld.

Allen Hart was born in Westchester county, New York, in 1803. He came to Hudson, Ill., in 1836, and moved to



**LOUIS H. VAN ALSTINE.**

what is now the Hart homestead in Palestine township in 1837, having purchased the property from the U. S. government. He was a member of the first jury that ever tried a case in Woodford county. This case was heard at the April term of the circuit court at Versailles, in 1842 and was entitled: "The People, etc. vs Jos. L. Gardner, indictment for attempt to do bodily injury." The verdict was guilty, and Gard-

ner was fined \$30 and costs. One of the attorneys in the case was Abraham Lincoln. In 1850 when Palestine township (which then included El Paso township) was organized, Mr. Hart was elected supervisor, which office he held for several terms. He was the first passenger to land at Kappa from a passenger train, having returned from a visit to New York just in time to get on board the first passenger train that ever passed through Kappa, which was in 1854. Mr. Hart died in 1879 very suddenly of heart disease. He was a pleasant and very popular gentleman and his family are all highly respected. A son, John Hart, and Mrs. Judge Kennedy and his grand-children, Circuit Clerk Louis Van Alstine and Mrs. Wm. A. VanAlstine, still reside in Woodford county. Attorney Harvey Hart and Dr. Ed Hart with their two sisters and mother reside in Bloomington. Wilson A. Hart is in the banking and abstracting business at La Junta, Colorado.

Mrs. Nancy Kirk one of the oldest residents of Minonk was born in Ireland in 1819. She came to America in 1845 and two years later she was married to William Kirk. She has nine children living; Wm. Kirk, of Woodford; Mrs. S. A. Hilsabeck, Minonk; Samuel Kirk, Iowa City; Mrs. J. C. Hilsabeck, Hastings, Neb.; Mrs. C. A. Trunk, Chatsworth, Matthew Kirk, Minonk; Mrs. Anna Kindig, Burlington; Mrs. M. T. Heath, Chicago, and James S. Kirk, Minonk.

### The Oldest Woman.



**MRS. NANCY KIRK.**

were unbroken. They suffered the usual hardships connected with pioneer life, but in spite of it all they prospered.

Mrs. Uphoff has many descendants, who hope to see her pass the century mark and live far beyond it. The children are B. W., Adam W., J. W., Bartlett W. Uphoff and Mrs. Giles. There are forty-two grand-children and sixty-eight

The oldest woman in the county is Mrs. Volke Uphoff, who was born in Riepe, Germany, in 1811. If she lives until June 4th, 1910, she will have reached her 99th year. She was the wife of Wait Uphoff, whose death occurred a number of years ago. They came to America in 1855 and remained in Peoria two years. They then came to Clayton township and settled on the farm in 1857. The country was then wild and almost unsettled, while the broad prairies

great grand-children. The subject of our sketch now resides in Benson, where she enjoys excellent health for one of her advanced age.



VOLKE UPHOFF.



### The Law.

In the early days of the county, attorneys were rarely seen within its borders, but as the country became more thickly settled, the demand for the services of the exponents of the law became more and more pressing. It was not, however, until after the organization of the county that a lawyer became a resident within its borders. The attorneys of those days drove great distances to appear before the court, and it was no uncommon occurrence for one to drive from Springfield to plead a cause in Woodford county. The attorneys present at the first session of court at Versailles included a number who afterward gained wide reputations as attorneys and politicians. Among these were Abraham Lincoln, John T. Staurt and Stephen T. Logan. The former had already given promise of future greatness, altho no one foretold for him the great career that he later made. He had been in the state legislature and had made something of a reputation as a public speaker. He was more famous as a story teller at that time than for any other talent. He had just closed his partnership with John T. Staurt, who had been elected in 1837 over Stephen A. Douglas as a member of congress; and had formed partnership with Judge Stephen T. Logan, one of the ablest lawyers in the state. This group of attorneys was alone sufficient to make this session of court famous as a gathering of great men, but there were others there whose names have been justly recorded in the hearts of the people as truly great men. There was the gallant Col. Ed. D. Baker, justly famed as the silver tongued Baker. David Davis, noted for his broad mind and sound judgment, while John J. Harding and A. Gridley were among the others present. There was the greatest spirit of good fellowship among them and there was an absence of that disposition of abuse that is now occasionally witnessed in court. The first licensed attorney was John B. Holland. He became well known in the county, and served as probate justice for several years. Other familiar names

among the attorneys of an early day were those of C. H. Chitty, A. E. Stevenson, S. P. Shope, J. A. Briggs, C. H. Radford, B. D. Meek, Robert T. Cassell and others

### **Medicine.**

The first physician in the county was Dr. Hazzard, who settled in Germantown in 1836. There had been others, such as Ben Major, who were skilled in the use of medicine but there were none prior to that time who devoted themselves exclusively to the practice of a physician. Dr. A. Reynolds was a pioneer physician at Bowling Green. J. S. Whitmire came to Metamora in 1847 and was for many years a well known figure among the members of the medical fraternity. Few among the early settlers who were not acquainted with his name, which was a household word among them. He associated with him in his practice, Dr. Z. H. Whitmire. Another well known figure was that of Dr. Tweddale, of Washburn, who for many years was a successful practitioner in the county. Dr. Wilcox at Minonk was for many years a leader in the professional and political life of the county. He has been succeeded by his son, who is a very successful physician. Dr. Lichtenberger was another prominent doctor. His son, N. C. Lichtenberger, still resides in Eureka, where his father practiced. Other well known names are Drs. Crawford, Rosenberg, Slemmons, Schiffbauer, Tribbey and John.

In 1870 the Woodford County Medical Association was organized and semi-annual meetings are now held.

### **Historical Society.**

Another organization that has a growing membership is that of the Woodford County Historical Association. It was formed in December, 1903, and holds its meetings semi-annually. The purpose of the society is to collect historical data and to keep it in a manner that will make it of service in supplying a complete record of matters pertaining to the growth and development of the county. The following are officers: President, L. J. Freese; vice-president, Isaac B.



Church of the Immaculate Conception at Lourds.

Hammers; secretary, Miss Amanda Jennings; treasurer, Amos Marshall. The association gives promise of great usefulness.

### A Sad Accident.

One of the most serious accidents that ever occurred in Eureka was that in which W. E. Wyrick, city marshal, lost

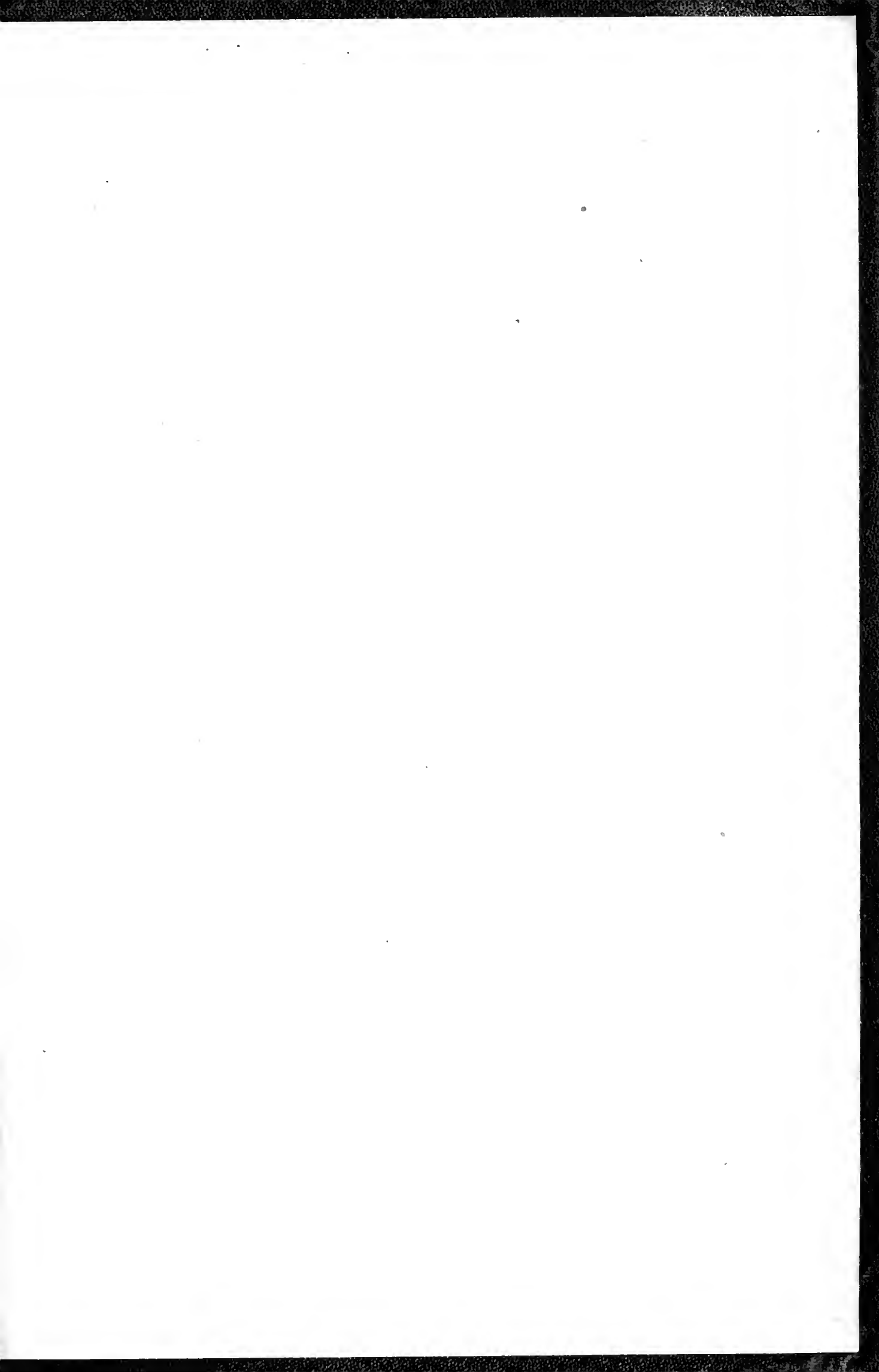


**W. E. WYRICK.**

his life. It was his custom to look after the pumping for the city water works, and went down to the plant early Tuesday morning, October 12th. He had been there but a short time when the muffler of the gasoline engine exploded and he was so seriously injured that his death occurred in a short time. He succeeded in dragging himself a short distance from the pumping station, and attracted the attention of the people of the vicinity by calling for assistance. Aid was of no avail. He died at 7:15 A. M. He was born in Pennsylvania, October 12th, 1868, and was married to Miss Minnie Brandt in this city. He was a member of the Knights of Pythias and Modern Woodmen, and had made a splendid record as city marshal.







UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA

977.353M78H C001  
HISTORY OF WOODFORD COUNTY EUREKA



3 0112 025392793